

THE  
HISTORIANS OF PERTH



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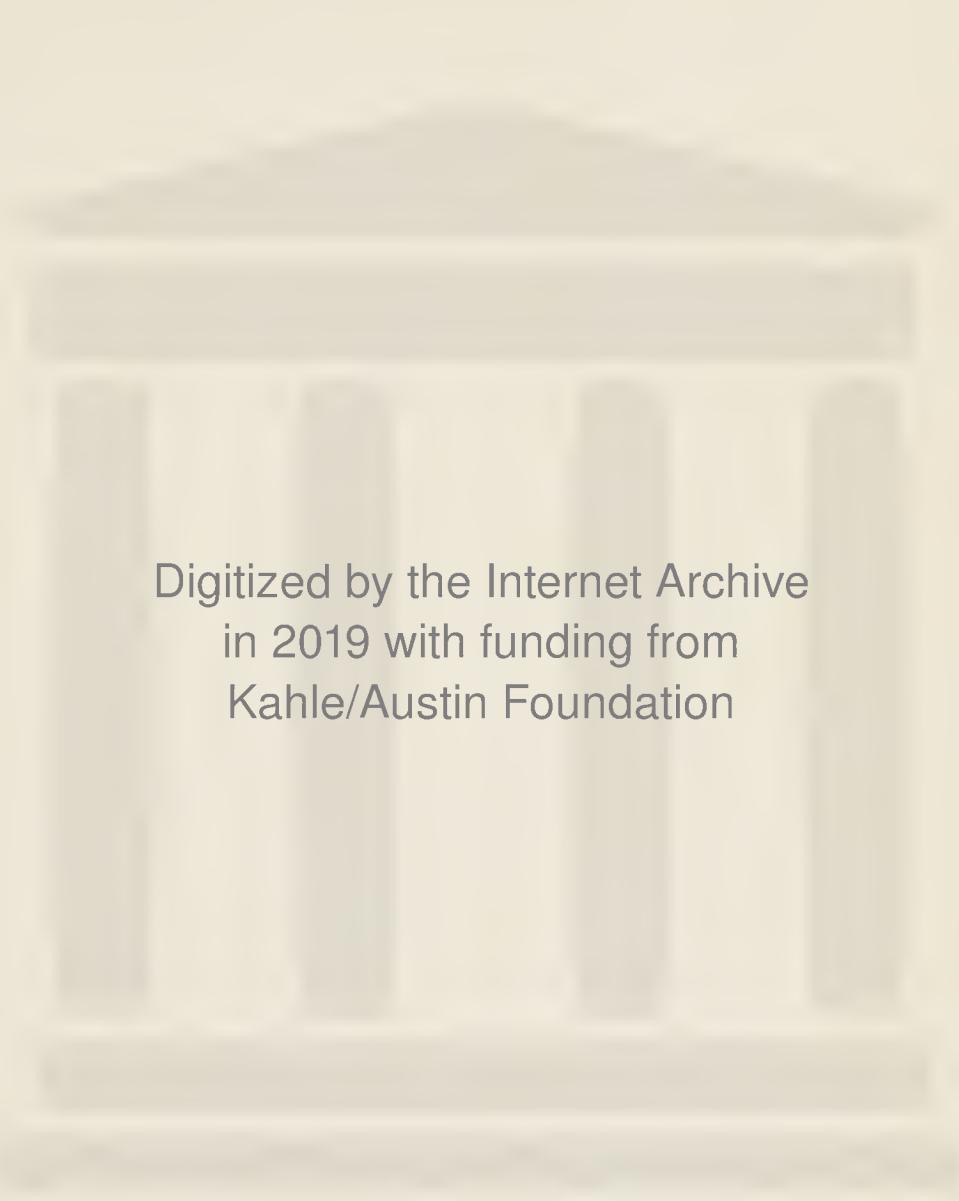


In Affectionate Remembrance  
of my Constant and True Friend  
W<sup>m</sup> Robert Whittet

Perth 6<sup>th</sup> Oct<sup>r</sup> 1906

## THE HISTORIANS OF PERTH





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PERTH.

# THE HISTORIANS OF PERTH AND OTHER LOCAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL WRITERS, UP TO THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

BY

D. CRAWFORD SMITH, F.S.A. (SCOT.)

AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF THE ANCIENT MASONIC  
LODGE OF SCOON AND PERTH"

PERTH: JOHN CHRISTIE  
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TO THE  
SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE CITY OF PERTH  
AT HOME AND ABROAD  
UNITED IN LOVE FOR, AND ADMIRATION  
OF, THE DEAR PLACE OF THEIR NATIVITY

337152



## P R E F A C E

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THIS bundle of Essays on the lives of the Historians of Perth and criticisms of their works, I give forth to the local world with some confidence. From the encouragement I have received I am led to believe that this Bibliography of writers on Perth will supply a felt want. I trust that my work will prove interesting to the citizens of Perth and to the natives of the Fair City both at home and abroad. My review of these works may be useful to all who have not made much of a study of the history of Perth, and may serve as a guide to those who may wish to become better acquainted with an interesting subject. These papers are the work of my leisure, and are chiefly appreciations of the works of the different writers. I have striven to be correct in my statements and just to the writers of these histories, to whom we owe so much. Every picture in this gallery is confessedly that of a minor historian ; but they have all shown considerable knowledge, and that which they have written is expressed for the most part in a clear and distinct manner. The writing of this work has been to me a great pleasure, possibly because it has been

## PREFACE

a labour of love. I have done it for dear old Perth's sake, and if I have earned the approval of my fellow-citizens I shall be satisfied. I am well aware that literary work of this description is not always financially profitable, however educative it may be to the writer or useful to the reader. Writers, however, cannot always choose their subject, but must write as they are led.

I have to thank all those who have assisted me in any way. My thanks are especially due to the Proprietors of the Perth Newspapers for access to their old files. I also thank the large number of subscribers to this work, who have made it possible for me to publish it.

D. C. S.

PERTH, 31st May 1906.

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## INTRODUCTION

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THE history of Perth literature embraces a period short of three hundred years. Previous to the seventeenth century there were no writers who devoted themselves to writing the history of the town. Barbour in the fourteenth century, and Blind Harry in the fifteenth, refer to Perth. Hector Boece tells a remarkable tale about the destruction of Perth by a flood, which gained considerable currency in after years, but which has frequently been proved to be fabulous. Buchanan, in his account of this flood, follows Boece, but Fordun differs from both writers. But because the references of these old historians to Perth are more general than particular, they have not been included. There is another kind of literature in which Perth figures—that of Diaries, such as Mercer's *Chronicle* and Dundee's *Diary*; these might with advantage have been noticed, although they are a somewhat scrappy description of literature.

Local history and typography are the bypaths of historical study, but where a place bulks so largely as does Perth in the transactions of our country, its history at once assumes a

## INTRODUCTION

greater importance. In this gallery of local historians and miscellaneous writers up to the end of the nineteenth century, we have brought together the most important penmen who have contributed to the elucidation of the history of Perth, and endeavoured to give some account of their lives and works. They form a goodly band of exceeding interest, whose varied characteristics and abilities are well set forth in their own writings. The selected passages from each writer will, we think, be found interesting, and characteristic of the several authors. In the works of these historians such material already exists as may enable some future historian to write a History of Perth at once eloquent and reliable.

Perth is especially to be congratulated on having produced such a citizen as Henry Adamson, the poet-historian, whose poem, *The Muses' Threnodie*, may be classed as the oldest literary account of the town. This antique poem for more than a century and a quarter held the field as the only history of Perth. Then followed James Cant with his second edition of Adamson's work, burdened with a load of notes as curious as the poem itself, and his many valuable appendices. The Rev. James Scott, a painstaking historian, followed with his *Statistical Account of Perth*. Unfortunately much of Scott's other work is unpublished, but it is carefully preserved in the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh. In the Morison family we have a succession of able men who have given Perth a name in the annals of literature and of publishing. In 1836 appeared an unpretending volume, *Traditions of Perth*, which although inferior in literary merit is very readable. Penny,

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the author of this the most entertaining of all the books about Perth, wrote mostly about what he knew, and he has given us a picture of Perth in his own and in his father's time which we would be poor without. Thomas Hay Marshall and David Peacock, journalists of the old school, published almost simultaneously their histories of Perth in 1849. These last two authors have given us comprehensive accounts of the history of Perth ; and so has Robert Scott Fittis, from an ecclesiastical point of view. Mostly all the other writers we have included write on sectional and special subjects. Quite recently Mr. Samuel Cowan, J.P., has issued his *Ancient Capital of Scotland*, but owing to this large work having been published in this century it does not come within the prescribed limit of this book. Mr. George Wilson, ex-Lord Provost of Perth, the Deacon of the Glover Incorporation, also has just published an account of this old trade incorporation. Of the eight trade incorporations of Perth, only two have published some account of their ancient history. The Guildry Incorporation of Perth is in possession of valuable unpublished archives. The Town's records, the Presbytery records, and the Session records might also be made to yield valuable information.



# THE HISTORIANS OF PERTH

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## HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE CITY OF PERTH

PERTH is one of the most ancient of Scottish towns, dating probably from the dawn of civilisation in Scotland. The age or origin of the city cannot now be ascertained. Henry Adamson, the earliest topographical writer of Perth (1638), in his poetical way ascribes a Roman origin to the town, and nearly every writer on this subject since his time has not simply followed his lead, but has amplified his exuberant fancy. It is quite probable that this comparatively late tradition may be correct, but there is no substantial proof of a Roman origin or even occupation.

King David I. conferred important privileges on Perth, where he seems to have had considerable possessions. Possibly he built, or rather rebuilt, St. John's Church. He called Perth "his burgh," but he did the town a disservice when he gifted the church, the tithes of his lordship, his mansion, one of his fishings on the Tay, and a mansion or

manse belonging to the church, to the Monastery of Dunfermline in 1126. There was anciently a royal castle at Perth situated on the north side of the town near the street now known as Castle Gable. In the year 1160, Malcolm iv. was residing in the Castle of Perth when he was besieged by Ferquhard, Earl of Strathearn, and five other earls. Malcolm quelled his adversaries, and the same year he held a National Council at Perth. This king was succeeded by his brother, William the Lion, who convened several National Councils at Perth; and in 1210 he granted a Charter to the town for the regulation of trade, from which it appears that the Merchant Guild was in operation then. There was quite a number of Ecclesiastical Councils held at Perth in early times; the first one of which we have any record met in the year 1020.

#### BLACKFRIARS' MONASTERY

King Alexander ii. founded the Dominican Monastery at Perth in 1231. It was situated on the north side of the town, contiguous to the royal castle and gardens. The Castle of Perth seems to have become ruinous, at anyrate the king gifted the grounds to the monastery. Henceforth when the kings of Scotland resided at Perth they took up their abode with the Blackfriars, as was the custom of the times. Many of these monasteries were of the most sumptuous character,—the privileged houses of the princes of the Church,—having every comfort of the time, always beautiful in their architecture, and often delightful in their situation. There

was also a feeling of safety, which strong walls could not give, in a residence surrounded with the very odour of sanctity. What the Perth house of the Dominicans was like we cannot say, for not one stone remains on another; but we know that the gardens and the Gilten Arbour of the monks commanded the same view as is to-day enjoyed by the residents of Atholl Place and Atholl Crescent—the green turf of the North Inch, the clear-flowing Tay, and the distant hills.

### CARMELITE MONASTERY

Richard, Bishop of Dunkeld, founded at Perth, in the year 1262, a house for the order of Carmelites, on the lands of Tillilum on the west side of the town. This was the first monastery of the Whitefriars erected in Scotland. About the same time the Hospital and Nunnery of St. Leonard was founded on the south-west side of the town.

### THE CHAPEL OF OUR LADY

Besides the religious houses we have named there was the Chapel of our Lady at the foot of High Street, beside the bridge, on the site of which now stands the Municipal Buildings. The date of the foundation of this chapel is unknown, but it is described as an old building in 1210. This chapel was conveniently situated; travellers leaving the town might enter and ask the protection of the Mother of our Lord on their journey, while those entering might give thanks for a safe return.

## EARLY IMPORTANCE OF PERTH

Perth was a town of the first importance in those days ; it was a free burgh, while all the district around was under feudal law. The kings of Scotland were crowned at Scone, only two miles distant, and Perth was regarded as the capital of the country. What was then considered a large and extensive trade, was carried on by the merchants of Perth.

“Great Tay, through Perth, through towns, through country flies,  
Perth the whole kingdom with her wealth supplies.”

These lines are translated from the Latin of Alexander Neckham, Abbot of Exeter, who died in 1227. The infant commerce of Perth, and indeed the prosperity of the whole kingdom, was now about to be rudely shaken. Alexander III. died in 1286 from the effect of a fall from his horse, leaving his granddaughter, Princess Margaret of Norway (called the Maid of Norway), to succeed him. Momentous events in the history of Scotland follow in rapid succession—the death of the child-queen, who never reigned ; the intervention of Edward I., King of England ; the setting up of John Balliol as king ; his deposition by Edward ; the conquest of Scotland by the English ; the revolt under Sir William Wallace ; the patriot’s success at Stirling Bridge ; his failure at Falkirk ; his renunciation of the governorship of Scotland at Perth ; and, with his capture and cruel death, behold Scotland a conquered province of England. Edward reduced the fortresses in Scotland, but he rebuilt the walls

of Perth and fortified the town. He was a frequent visitor at Perth, and in 1296 he kept the feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist there. In 1306, however, Robert the Bruce, revolting from his sworn allegiance to Edward, was crowned King of Scotland; but for many years he was but a king in name. Sir Aymer de Vallance, afterwards Earl of Pembroke, was appointed by Edward, lieutenant and commander of the English forces, "with power to receive the middling men of Scotland to the king's peace." De Vallance lay at Perth expecting an attack by the King of Scots, who with a small force was lurking in the woods of Methven. A battle ensued at Methven, where Bruce was defeated and obliged to fly. The years which elapsed until Bannockburn were the most trying and perilous through which King Robert passed.

#### THE SIEGE OF PERTH

In the year 1312 Perth was besieged by King Robert in person. The town was then governed by Sir William de Oliphant, a Scotsman, who like many others had sworn fidelity to Edward. Bruce lay before the town for six weeks. Then raising the siege he marched away; but returning a week later, at midnight of January the 8th, 1313, he waded through the moat, scaled the walls, and took the strong-walled town by surprise. On the 7th June of the same year Edward I. died while leading a great army against Scotland, and Edward II. reigned in his stead. The Prince of Wales now became king, but he had none of the grit of

his father, and as a consequence the fortunes of King Robert now began steadily to mend.

#### BANNOCKBURN

Stirling Castle, which had been besieged by Edward de Bruce, the king's brother, was reduced to such straits that the governor, Sir Philip de Moubray, agreed to surrender if he was not relieved by midsummer of 1314. This arrangement brought out all the chivalry of England against the Scottish king. A great army was gathered together to subdue the Scots and relieve the Castle of Stirling. This great force of about 100,000 men was opposed by a small army of about 30,000. The English army was much better equipped than the Scottish. On the other hand the Scottish army was commanded by King Robert, one of the ablest, bravest, and most experienced generals of the time. The Scots were united and determined,—the very life of the nation was at stake. Defeat for Bruce meant subjugation for Scotland, and victory meant freedom. Happily for Scotland, Bannockburn was one of the greatest of world's victories to her. St. John the Baptist's Day of 1314 is the real date of the recovery of glorious freedom for Scotland. After this decisive battle King Robert devoted himself to setting his kingdom in order.

#### KING ROBERT AND PERTH

The king's favourite residence was at Cardross, on the Clyde, but he frequently resided at Perth. It was the fashion

of his time for kings to keep wild animals in captivity ; and so we learn from the royal accounts that King Robert possessed a lion, which he took with him to Perth on one of his visits, where a house was built for its accommodation, the cost of food for the beast being £6, 13s. 4d.

Owing to the hardships which King Robert had undergone in his youth he was afflicted with disease, and had frequently to consult his physician, Magister Malvinus, who resided at Perth. In 1328 the king issued a royal letter to the Abbot of Scone, desiring him to allow stones to be quarried at Kincarrathie and Balcormac for the repair of St. John's Church at Perth and the bridges of Perth and Earn. Possibly something was done then to keep those important edifices in good order. But the king's reign was drawing to a close ; he died on the 7th of June of the following year, leaving an only son, a boy of six years of age, who is known in history as David II.

#### BATTLE OF DUPPLIN

We now come to a second period of trouble for Scotland. In 1330, Edward Balliol, son of John Balliol, the Edwardian King of Scotland, left France, where he had been residing, for the Court of England. This move was ominous, as he was a claimant to the Scottish throne. Shortly afterwards, Balliol with his followers landed on the coast of Fifeshire, and marched as far as Dupplin on the river Earn ; here he was opposed by the Earl of Mar, Regent of the kingdom. A battle ensued, in which the Regent was defeated. Balliol then

marched to Perth, which he seized and fortified, and he was crowned king at Scone on the 24th September 1332, taking the title of Edward I. of Scotland. The new king, who can hardly be said to have reigned, then marched south to Roxburgh, where he publicly acknowledged Edward III. of England as his liege lord. No sooner had Balliol left Perth than the city was recaptured by Sir Simon Fraser and Sir Robert Keith, Earl Marischal. The supporters of the boy-king still struggled on, strengthened by the dissensions amongst the party of Balliol. In July 1335, Edward III. of England, accompanied by his kinsman, Edward I. of Scotland, arrived with a large force at Perth, which was not difficult to take, as the walls had become ruinous. Edward of England ravaged the north of Scotland, which was loyal to David, with fire and sword. He then returned to Perth, which town he ordered to be fortified with hewn stone, the expense to be defrayed by the abbeys of Dunfermline, St. Andrews, Lindores, Balmerino, Aberbrothock, and Cupar Angus. The Prior of St. Andrews paid 280 marks of good money in cash for the building of one tower and a gate. The Abbot of Lindores built the spy gate and the tower which stood at the riverside, which was known as the Monk's Tower until its demolition.

#### DEATH OF THE EARL OF CORNWALL AT PERTH

While Edward was residing in Perth, and possibly these works being carried out, his brother John, Earl of Cornwall, came north to Perth, devastating southern Scotland in the

most ruthless manner possible. Before his arrival the king had knowledge of his only brother's savage warfare. It has been said that the brothers met in the church of St. John. Edward reproached his brother, who returned a haughty answer. The king, highly incensed, stabbed him to the heart. On Edward's return to England, Perth was retaken by Robert, Lord High Steward, the Regent, for King David (1339). In 1341 the young King David and his Queen Joan (sister to Edward III.) returned from France, where they had been sent for safety, and immediately proceeded to Perth, and were received with great joy.

#### JOHN MERCER, PROVOST OF PERTH

The first Provost of Perth of whom we have any account was John Mercer. According to Bailie Alexander Blair's manuscript he held this position in 1356. James Cant, however, in his List of Magistrates, gives 1374. Both authorities may be right. John Mercer was a merchant prince, and the first laird of Aldie. Besides holding the office of Provost he represented the town in Parliament. He stood high in the counsels of State, and the king honoured him frequently by appointing him his Ambassador to the Courts of England and France. For at least one year he acted as Receiver of the National Revenue. In 1376, when returning from France, where he had been on a mission of State, he was wrecked off the coast of Northumberland, and he then "fell among thieves," for he with all his ship's company were made prisoners and their goods confiscated. He was lodged in

Scarborough Castle ; but the imprisonment of the old man did not last long, for by the intercession of the Earl of Douglas, his feudal superior, he was released, although his goods were not restored to him. His son, Bailie Andrew Mercer, immediately fitted out an expedition to revenge the capture and spoliation of his father. Commanding a considerable fleet of Scottish, French, and Spanish vessels, he made for Scarborough, where he attacked and captured all the shipping he found there. The raid of this Perth bailie caused terror throughout the whole east coast of England, so that John Philpot, Mayor of London, hurriedly got a fleet together, and in 1378 he met Mercer, laden with his prizes, and defeated him, taking his vessels to London. The following year Philpot gave one of the largest of Mercer's ships to the King of England. Mercer, however, was not slain, as the English historians relate, but was liberated in order to avoid war between the two countries.

John Mercer, or his ancestor, acquired a burial vault in St. John's Church, and popular tradition has credited him with having gifted the North and South Inches (*i.e.* the Meadows lying on each side of the town) to Perth. The well-known punning couplet :

“Folks say the Mercers tried the town to cheat,  
When for twa *inches* they did win sax *feet*,”

gives some colour to this tradition, which, however, on examination is found to be incorrect. John Mercer died in 1380 and was buried in his vault.

During the reign of Robert III. (1396) occurred that sanguinary encounter called the

#### BATTLE OF THE INCH

Two highland clans, the Clan Chattan and the Clan Kay, had long been at deadly feud, disturbing the Highlands by their continual fighting with each other. It was proposed and agreed that they should select thirty of the best warriors from each clan and settle their differences by a pitched battle before the king at Perth, armed only with weapons of offence. The vanquished were to have pardon for all past offences, and the victors were to be rewarded by the King. History tells us very little about this tragic fight; it was certainly a barbarous method of settling a dispute. Barriers were erected, as we learn from the royal accounts, and the King viewed the battle from the Gilten Arbour in the gardens of the Blackfriars' Monastery. Just before the combat began it was discovered that one of the chosen combatants of the Clan Chattan was missing, and proclamation was made amongst the crowd for a man to take his place. Henry of the Wynd, the Perth armourer, is said to have been the man who, for half a French crown of gold, took the place of the runaway. Then ensued a terrible war of extermination. Victory inclined to the side of Clan Chattan. Of the Clan Kay only one remained alive, and he fleeing from the wearied foe leaped into the flowing river and so escaped. The prowess of Henry Wynd is said to have materially helped Clan Chattan to gain the victory.

So well did Henry fight, and so skillfully, that he came out of the battle unhurt. When asked on whose side he had fought, he said that "he had fought for his own hand," which saying became a local proverb. This clan-duel is one of the chief and most stirring incidents in Sir Walter Scott's romance of *The Fair Maid of Perth*.

#### "COMING EVENTS CAST THEIR SHADOWS BEFORE"

In 1405 or 1407, John Resby, an English priest, was burned at Perth for preaching the doctrines of John Wycliffe. He may be said to have been the first martyr for Protestantism in Scotland.

#### JAMES I. OF SCOTLAND AND THE CARTHUSIAN MONASTERY

In 1424, James I. was ransomed from the English, and was crowned, along with his queen, at Scone. He held his first Parliament at Perth. During the long years of his captivity he had doubtless often thought of the important duties which lay before him when he should come to his kingdom. He was a well-educated and intelligent king, more anxious for the welfare of his country than for his own comfort. The year following his coronation he founded at Perth the Carthusian Monastery. The young king was a reformer in the Church as well as in the State. The Carthusian order of Monks was one of the strictest, the members of which devoted themselves to

religion as a matter of course, but also to silence and study. The order had been introduced into England more than two hundred years before this time, where its influence in the community had been for good. This was the first and only house of this order in Scotland, and during the comparatively short time it existed its influence must have had a marked effect in Perth, and indeed throughout the country. Perth has been for long one of the most literary towns of Scotland, and who dare say that the work of these silent monks died with the Reformation! Towards literature they occupied pretty much the same place as the printing press of to-day. They were the transcribers of Holy Writ and the disseminators of what native literature existed in their day.

The Carthusian Monastery stood on the site now occupied by King James the vi.'s Hospital, and the grounds extended southwards as far as Craigie Haugh (now used as a yard by the Police Commission), and possibly as far as the one time Nunnery of St. Magdalene (now the farm of St. Magdalene), which was suppressed and the grounds given to the new institution. Pomariun, King Street, and James Street are built on the lands of the Charterhouse; also the western portion of the South Inch and Leonard Bank formed part of their demesne.

This stately monastery, which according to all accounts was the grandest in Perth, was shortly to become the last resting-place of the young king.

## THE ASSASSINATION OF KING JAMES I.

In 1437, while the king was residing in the Blackfriars' Monastery with his court, Sir Robert Graham and his fellow-conspirators gained access to the king's apartments, where they barbarously slew their king. The death of the reforming king was a severe blow to the welfare of the country and a dire misfortune to Perth. This great calamity dashed the rising prosperity of the city, and from this time Perth gradually lost the high position she had occupied amongst the towns of Scotland. During the reign of the third James (1482) Edinburgh was recognised as the capital of the country, and the Estates regularly met there.

## FRANCISCAN MONASTERY

Yet another monastery was founded in Perth, when in 1460, Lawrence, first Lord Oliphant, endowed the Franciscans or Greyfriars. Their house and grounds occupied the site of the burial-ground known as "Greyfriars" on the south side of the town. The site of the monastery being the north-west corner of the burial-ground.

Notwithstanding the numerous religious houses, hospitals, chapels, and altars in Perth,

## THE DOCTRINES OF THE REFORMATION

were spreading amongst the people. On St. Andrew's Day, 1543, Cardinal Beaton came to Perth, when six "Christers"

or Reformers (five men and the wife of one of the men) were arrested and lodged in the Spey or Spy Tower. Their trial was short; possibly they were convicted on their own evidence, as they made no secret of their opinions. They were convicted of heresy, and the five men were hanged the next day, while the woman was drowned in a pool of the river near by. It is said that the Cardinal witnessed the execution from an upper window of the Spey Tower. Perth was then a walled town (Buchanan says it was the only walled town of Scotland), with an estimated population of between five and six thousand people. It was then one of the most populous towns in the kingdom.

The harsh measures of the Romish Church did not have the effect of stamping out the "Christers," as the Protestant doctrines continued to grow in favour. Perth may be said to have been the Cradle of the Reformation. The town was then one of the most important in the country, and its influence was felt throughout the whole land. The effect of the high-handed procedure of the Cardinal was such that men's minds were drawn to the consideration of the reform doctrines for which these martyrs so cheerfully died. The laity had begun to think for themselves, and they rejected the false teaching of a licentious priesthood. The Church had waxed wealthy and grown corrupt while the people lay in poverty and ignorance. The wealth of the Church of Rome hastened its downfall, and when the fall came it was the oppressors who were spoiled. We are not surprised at the Reformation; it would have been a greater wonder had

there been none. The spiritual life of the people was awaking, and religious thought was ripening for the change.

Knox's famous Perth sermon was as a match to light the tow. On Thursday, the 11th of May 1559, John Knox preached a sermon in St. John's Church which has been described as a discourse "vehement against idolatry." After the sermon, when the major part of the assembly had dispersed, a priest unadvisedly began to celebrate mass, when a riot in the church ensued, and the altars and images were thrown down. Nor did the mob rest satisfied with this purging of the church, but proceeded to spoil and overthrow the four great monastic houses which stood just outside the walls of the town. No more did these great institutions dominate Perth; they had served their day,—their influence had gone, and their ecclesiastical architecture and grandeur lay in the dust. Only the Parish Church of St. John the Baptist was spared, and still remains—the only pre-Reformation building—to grace the city; but the Reformation of religion was launched, the past was broken with, and a new and better era begun. The Queen-Regent endeavoured to suppress the Reformers, and although the armed forces of each party met on several occasions, yet no battle was fought. Terms were frequently made, but not kept by the Queen. She considered Perth to be a place of some consequence, for she garrisoned it with six hundred Scottish soldiers in French pay. John Charteris of Kinfauns was appointed Provost of Perth by the Regent, and with the

soldiers of the queen he harassed the Protestant inhabitants of the city.

The “Congregation,” as the Reformers came to be called, raised an army and sat down before Perth. This army was officered by Lords Argyle, Ruthven, and James Stuart. Provost Haliburton of Dundee was also active in the cause. The garrison was summoned to surrender, but refused. The day was spent in fruitless negotiation ; and at ten o'clock of the evening of the 24th of June (1559) the besiegers opened fire, which was promptly returned by the Queen's soldiers. Little damage was done on either side and few lives were lost, when the garrison sent out a flag of truce, offering to suspend hostilities until noon of the next day ; and should they not be relieved before then they would surrender, on being allowed to march out with ensigns displayed. This was agreed to, and the Sabbath morning dawned in peace. When the hour of twelve struck on the bell of St. John the gates were opened, and the *gallant* six hundred, who evidently had not much stomach for fight, marched out.

The army of the Congregation then took possession of the town, and Lord Ruthven resumed his office of Provost.

Incipient warfare now raged throughout Scotland. It was the queen's intention to seize Stirling and the passes of the Forth, and in order to frustrate this a large force was despatched by the lords of the Congregation.

## PERTH VOLUNTEERS

With this army were three hundred volunteers from Perth, who wore, as a symbol of their resolution in this holy cause, halters of rope round their necks. These ropes were afterwards called "St. Johnstoun's Ribbons," a name by which halters came to be locally known. Adamson, in his *Muses' Threnodie*, dwells on this incident :

"Such were these men who for religion's sake,  
A cord of hemp about their necks did take,  
Solemnly sworn to yield their lives thereby,  
Or they the Gospel's verity deny,"

and so on. The Perth Volunteers bore a creditable part in the fightings of the time, and were present at the seizure of Edinburgh. In 1560 occurred the death of the Queen-Regent, and the same year the Scottish Parliament formally suppressed the Prelatic Roman Church and established the Reformed Presbyterian Church. The first reformed minister of Perth, Mr. John Row, was appointed this same year.

## KING JAMES THE VI.'S HOSPITAL

In 1569, Regent Moray, in the name of the young King James I., granted a Charter to King James vi. Hospital, which conveyed the properties and rents which had belonged to the four Perth monasteries to the ministers and elders of Perth, as trustees for behoof of the poor members of Jesus Christ. This Charter was confirmed by the king when he

came of age. Dr. Robert Milne tells us in his *Hospital Book* the difficulties which beset the trustees in securing possession of their property. In (20th December) 1580 the managers of the hospital gave the grounds which had belonged to the Greyfriars' Monastery for a burial-place, which continued to be the common place of sepulchre until Wellshill Cemetery was provided about the beginning of the last century.

#### THE GOWRIE CONSPIRACY

The mysterious episode which has been called the Gowrie Conspiracy, occurred at Perth on the 5th of August 1600 within the Gowrie House. Much has been written on this mysterious event in our history, but it remains as inscrutable as ever. While some hold it to have been a conspiracy on the part of the king to take the life and estates of Gowrie, others consider it to have been a plot on the part of the Earl and his brother to secure possession of the person of the king, and so dominate the council of the nation. It is generally conceded now that the king's life was never in danger. What is certain is that the Earl of Gowrie, who was then Provost of Perth, and his brother lost their lives, and that the king and his courtiers profited by their removal. King James was specially gracious to Perth after this event ; he condescended to accept the office of Provost the following year, and took the oath to defend the liberties of the town. Of course we understand the king only accepted this office in what we would now call an honorary manner. His

Majesty also granted a new and special Charter to the city (15th November 1600), confirming the old and giving new privileges.

In 1638, Adamson's *Muses' Threnodie* was published at Edinburgh, being the year following the death of the poet. The poem is in reality a metrical treatise on the history and antiquities of Perth and its neighbourhood.

#### ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

At this time Perth consisted of one parish, and the only place of worship was St. John's Church. The western part of the nave (now called the West Church) was cut off by partition walls from the main building very early in the seventeenth century (or possibly about 1598). It was called the "New Kirk" and sometimes the "Little Kirk," and was used for various purposes. "Lofts" or galleries began to be erected in the church about 1609. The choir, or eastern portion, was not separated until 1771.

In 1807 the town was divided into four parishes, three of which, namely, the east, middle, and west, were accommodated in St. John's Church, while for the fourth, St. Paul's Church was built.

In 1618 the General Assembly of the Church was held at Perth, and passed "the Five Articles of Perth," which were received with no favour by the people. James died in 1625, and Charles I. entered on the ecclesiastical policy in Scotland which his father had so much at heart.

## THE COVENANTERS

The people of Scotland, harassed by the measures of Charles, entered into the bond of the Covenant, which was largely signed throughout the country alike by the nobility and the common people. The Covenanters rose in rebellion—the scene of one of the battles of the time being at Tibbermuir, near Perth. The Earl of Montrose, who at first had embraced the Covenant, was won over to the king's side. Charles issued to this nobleman a commission as his lieutenant in Scotland. A small body of Irish soldiers, to which were joined a large number of Highlanders, assembled at Blair Atholl. Here his situation was critical: Argyle was behind him pursuing the Irish, while the army of the Covenanters, numbering some six or seven thousand men, lay at Perth.

On Sunday, the 1st of September 1644, Montrose engaged the Covenanters at Tibbermuir, but the raw, ill-led soldiers of the Covenant were no match for the wild Irish and the hardy Highlanders. It has been said that the leaders of the Covenanting army were but half-hearted in the cause. In a few minutes the battle, if battle it could be called, was changed into a rout—the citizen army flying at breakneck speed in all directions, but chiefly in the direction of Perth. It has been said of the Covenanting army that “the men had neither the courage to fight nor the sense to flee.” Flight was all that was left to them, and many were killed in the pursuit. Within sight of Perth—the city of refuge—and on the fields to the north of Needless Road (the old Glasgow

Road), many of them met their death. A small memorial tablet let into the wall of a thatch cottage tells the story. Montrose's victory was complete. All the stores of the Covenanters, with six pieces of cannon, fell into the hands of the Earl, and Perth surrendered the following day.

After the execution of Charles I. by the Parliament of England, his son, afterwards Charles II., came to Perth, where he resided for some time, and on Wednesday, the 1st of January 1651, he was crowned at Scone, this being the last coronation in Scotland.

#### CROMWELL AT PERTH

Cromwell now invaded Scotland, and making himself master of Fife he marched to Perth, which surrendered to him on the 3rd of August 1651. Perth was one of the five places where forts were erected by the Commonwealth. The fort or citadel at Perth was situated immediately to the south of the Greyfriars' burial-ground, by the side of the river Tay. It was four-sided, and surrounded by a moat, within which it extended to 266 feet on each side.

#### THE RESTORATION

At the Restoration the citadel was gifted to the town as some recompense for the hardships which had been endured by the townsfolk by its erection. The stones and material were sold for building purposes, and no vestige of it now remains. The citizens of Perth rejoiced at the Restoration, and exhibited their loyalty in a variety of ways. Many of

them, however, were true to the Covenant, as the large fines in which they were amerced amply testify.

The title of Lord Provost of Perth began to be used by the chief magistrate about this time, and he was so styled when called to attend the Convention of Royal Burghs.

From the Restoration to the Revolution was indeed a troublous time, not only in Perth but throughout Scotland. A young unmarried woman of Perth, named Isobel Alison, was a martyr for the Covenant, she being hanged at Edinburgh in 1681.

#### THE REVOLUTION

Eight years of suffering passed, and then came the dawn of better times. William Prince of Orange and Mary his wife were called to the throne, and the galling yoke of persecution was shifted from the shoulders of the Presbyterians to those of the Episcopalian.

Graham of Claverhouse, who had been created Viscount Dundee, raised an insurrection in Scotland in favour of James VII., and took Perth by surprise on the 11th of May 1689. General Mackay was sent to oppose him, and on the 17th of June was fought the memorable battle of Killiecrankie, when Dundee lost his life, although his little army was victorious. The Government of William and Mary received the hearty support of the great body of the people both in England and Scotland.

After the death of Queen Anne, devotion to the Stuart cause was kept alive amongst the persecuted Episcopalian.

The Treaty of Union between England and Scotland, which was accomplished in 1707, helped to render the Government unpopular.

#### THE JACOBITE REBELLION OF 1715

The next great event of the eighteenth century was the rebellion in favour of the Stuarts, engineered by the Earl of Mar. On the 6th of September 1715 this nobleman proclaimed James, the Chevalier de St. George, king at Castletown of Braemar. The Highlanders flocked to support him. Perth was taken for James by Colonel John Hay, the brother of the Earl of Kinnoull, on the 14th September (Cant says the 16th), and on the 18th he was appointed governor of the town. Mar, with his army considerably reinforced, entered Perth, and after staying there some time he ventured south. Argyle, who was in command of the forces of the Government, met the insurgents on Sunday, the 13th of November, at Sheriffmuir, near Dunblane, where a battle was fought, in which both sides claimed the victory. Mar then retired to Perth.

The Chevalier arrived at Scone, and took up his abode there on 8th January 1716. Next day he made his public entry into Perth, where he met with a cold reception. He seems to have been in bad health, and his appearance and manner had anything but an inspiriting effect on his followers. The Rebellion was a failure. James was much disappointed, but he did nothing to make his enterprise a success. Shortly afterwards the rebel army left Perth and dispersed, while the

Chevalier accompanied by Mar, found refuge in a ship lying off the coast near Montrose, and so escaped to France. After this escapade the Government, recognising the importance of Perth, made the town a military centre.

#### PERTH PRESS

In the year of Mar's rebellion there was issued from the Perth Press of Robert Freebairn a quarto pamphlet, entitled *Scotland's Lament, Confabulation, and Prayer*. This booklet, which is exceedingly well printed, is supposed to be the first-born of a press which during that century and the first half of the following, printed and published more books than were published in any other provincial town of Scotland.

#### THE PROVOST AND THE LAST PENALTY OF THE LAW

A tragic event happened in Perth in the year 1723. A military officer having some quarrel with a dancing master, ran him through the body with his sword. He was arraigned before the Provost and Magistrates, tried by a jury, found guilty, and sentenced to death. The friends of the condemned man bestirred themselves and got the king's pardon for him, but before it arrived at Perth he had paid the last penalty of the law. Owing to this circumstance the ancient power of the Provost in criminal cases was taken away.

#### BEGINNINGS OF DISSENT

At this time the Episcopalians of Scotland were still labouring under civil disabilities, but the Presbyterian Church

of Scotland<sup>1</sup> was a united body, the Church of the great mass of the people. The Episcopalian Church mainly consisted of the nobility and their immediate adherents. Now we come to the first real split in the Church of Scotland. In 1728 the Synod of Angus and Mearns deposed the Rev. John Glasse, minister of Tealing, on account of the divergence of his views on Church government, who thereupon became the leader of a small body of Christians which are still known by his name. This community spread to England, where the members are known as Sandemanians. A Church of this order was erected in Perth in 1733 by John Glasse. Another break from the Church of Scotland, that of the Secession, occurred shortly after this split, much more important and far-reaching.

In October 1732 the Synod of Perth and Stirling met at Perth, when the Rev. Ebenezer Erskine, the moderator, then minister at Stirling, preached a sermon which was published, and which gave offence to a large number of the members of Synod. On account of his outspoken sermon Erskine was libelled and prosecuted by the General Assembly of the Church which was held the following year. The Assembly rebuked him at the bar, declaring that he had departed from the Word of God and the Standards of the Church. To this sentence he would not submit, holding himself at liberty to testify against all defections of the Church. He was joined in his protest by William Wilson, one of the ministers of Perth; Alexander Moncrieff, minister of Abernethy; and James Fisher, minister of Kinclaven. These four ministers were afterwards joined by

<sup>1</sup> There was a small body of dissenters called Cameronians.

four others, namely, Ralph Erskine of Dunfermline; Thomas Mair, Orwell; Thomas Nairn, Abbotshall; and James Thomson, Burntisland. These brethren met on Thursday, the 6th December 1733, at Gairney Bridge, and after prayer they joined together in forming the Associate Presbytery. The General Assembly of the Church of 1740 formally deposed these eight ministers, and they were excluded from their parishes.

Perth, as we have seen, was the birthplace of the Reformation. So the first Seceders, the Glassites, found a home within its walls, and the second and greater secession was brought about by Ebenezer Erskine at Perth, assisted by one of the ministers of Perth and others from the immediate neighbourhood. When William Wilson found the doors of his church closed against him, he stilled the clamour of the crowd by saying, "The Master whom I serve is the Prince of Peace." The deacon of the Glovers immediately offered the ejected minister the use of a yard belonging to his Incorporation, and thither the large congregation repaired, when William Wilson conducted divine service. A large church was subsequently built in the bare, barn-like style of architecture which prevailed in the beginning of the eighteenth century.

We have not space to detail how the Seceders split into sections, how they united again, and how a remnant of Anti-Burghers (which still exists as a Church known as the Original Seceders, or "Auld Lights") refused to join in the union. History repeats itself. In our own day, in the larger union with the Free Church (a later secession), a small body which

has refused to join the United Free Church is now known as the Free Church of Scotland. There is room in Scotland for all her sects. After all is said, they are united in more and greater things than those which keep them divided.

#### JACOBITE REBELLION OF 1745

The next great event in which Perth figured was the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. Perth had been enjoying a moderate degree of prosperity; the citizens had been participating in a fuller and more comfortable life. There was no cloud in the political sky, when suddenly the news was spread that Prince Charles Edward Stuart had landed at Moidart on the 25th of July, and that the standard of rebellion was again unfurled in Scotland. The jubilation of the Jacobites is commemorated in the stirring song, "What's a' the steer, kimmer." Men risked life and fortune in the cause of the Stuarts, but the Jacobite women were filled to overflowing with an enthusiasm which like a flood carried all before it, and which was worthy of a better cause.

Perth lay open to the Highlanders. Her ancient walls had long since been demolished. She had outgrown her old borders, which may still easily be traced from the river up by the canal (now Canal Street), following the branch of the town's lade (by Canal Crescent, along South Methven Street) on to the main lade, and following it (down Mill Street) to where it joins the Tay. The great body of the citizens favoured the Hanoverian dynasty. Provost James Crie (who was a physician, and married to a daughter of the house of Moncrieff

of Culfargie), the Magistrates, and George Miller the Town Clerk, with several others, fled to Edinburgh when a party of Cameron Highlanders, on the evening of the 3rd of September, entered the town.

Charles made his formal entry into Perth next day. No artist has put this gay scene on canvas for us, but we can in imagination picture it for ourselves. The present stone bridge was not then built; there was no George Street, nor had St. John Street been formed. The principal streets were High Street, South Street, Watergate (the fashionable quarter of the town), Kirkgate, and Skinnergate. The cross—an ornate structure—stood on High Street where Kirkgate and Skinnergate intersect it. The prince with his companions entered the town by the North Port or Gate. Proceeding by Castle Gable, they crossed the lade and entered Skinnergate. On the arrival of the cavalcade at the Cross, the old Chevalier was immediately proclaimed king by the title of James VIII. The house at the south-west corner of Skinnergate was then being built, and the scaffolding was crowded with fickle sightseers, whose shouts rent the air. There were some who refused to doff, and their hats were promptly knocked off by the more enthusiastic Jacobites.

Charles took up his abode in the town residence of Viscount Stormont, an antique house with a timber front, situated in High Street, the site of which is now occupied by the office of the National Bank of Scotland. Charles stayed in Perth until the 11th, drilling and arming his growing army. Then he marched south and began that campaign which

seemed for a time like to have changed the dynasty. Oliphant of Gask was left at Perth as governor of the town.

On the 30th of October occurred the birthday of King George II. (the Highlanders had all left the town; only Oliphant was left with a small guard), when several of the young tradesmen of Perth took possession of the church-steeple and rung the bells. Feeling ran high: the mob made bonfires on the streets, broke the windows of all who would not illuminate, and so celebrated the birthday of King George. Oliphant was shut up in the Council House, and the mob required him to withdraw. Shots were fired on both sides, and several lives were lost. Next day a small force of Jacobites was brought in to the town and order was restored.

The fortunes of the rebel army are well known: how the Highlanders won the battle of Prestonpans, how the Prince entered Edinburgh, and how he marched at the head of his followers into England, penetrating as far as Derby. Few joined the Jacobite standard in England. Dissension spread amongst the Highlanders, who were not subject to discipline, and a retreat, much to the disgust of the young Prince, was agreed on. The rebels reached Scotland in safety, followed by the Duke of Cumberland, commanding the king's forces. The Provost and Magistrates of Perth having now returned, received Cumberland with open arms. He did not, however, stay long in the "Fair City," but continued his pursuit of the fast-diminishing army of rebels, which he

defeated at Culloden Moor on the 16th of April 1746. This victory was followed by a savage cruelty, which earned for the royal general the title of “Cumberland the Butcher.”

On the suppression of the Rebellion the Government, again recognising the importance of Perth, stationed a large body of Hessian troops in the town. The Hessians were much liked in Perth, and it became a proverb to say of anyone who possessed good looks, that he was “as bonnie as a Hessian.”

#### PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY OF PERTH

Quietness and peace being restored, there followed a period of prosperity for Perth. Various industries were introduced, the most important of which was the manufacture of linen.

According to a Census of Perth taken by the Magistrates in 1766, the population amounted to 7542 persons. Of these the Established Church claimed 3361; the Secession Church, 1878; the Episcopal Church, 124; and the Independent, 164. In less than fifty years the population was more than doubled; and in 1831, from an enumeration made by the Magistrates, we find that the population had increased to 23,000. According to the last Census the population of Perth in 1901 numbered 32,872.

#### PERTH BRIDGE

The Bridge of Perth, which like the Church was dedicated to St. John the Baptist, dated from a very early period.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, however, it was undermined by a flood, and was evidently considered beyond repair. John Mylne, a celebrated architect of that time, was instructed to build a new bridge. Mylne's bridge was finished by 1617, but it did not long survive, being carried away by a flood in 1621. From that time the traffic across the river was carried on by means of ferry boats until 1771, when the present handsome stone bridge, designed by the celebrated engineer John Smeaton, was opened. George Street was formed as an approach to the bridge. A few years later Charlotte Street was formed, then St. John Street was opened up. With an increased population Perth made rapid strides in improvement at this time.

#### THOMAS HAY MARSHALL

one of the most celebrated of her Provosts, ruled the city in the early years of the nineteenth century, and under his auspices both the north and south sides of the town were feued, and spacious streets, terraces, and crescents were formed. Marshall Place was named after this Provost, and Rose Terrace took its name from his wife, Rose Anderson.

#### ADAM ANDERSON, LL.D.

Rector of the Academy, afterwards Professor of Natural Philosophy at St. Andrews, was one of the most learned and useful citizens of Perth at this time. He designed the first gasworks of Perth, the town being lit with coal

gas in January of 1823. Dr. Anderson was also the engineer and architect for the Perth Waterworks. The Water House which he erected still stands at the south end of Tay Street, and is an elegant and striking memorial of his connection with Perth. Previous to 1829 the town was supplied with water from the lade and from wells, while now we have a pure supply of water from the clear flowing Tay.

### POLITICS, PHILOSOPHY, AND ART

These were very strenuous times, Reform and Anti-Corn-Law meetings were being held in Perth and throughout the whole country. The Anti-Corn-Law meetings were held in the North Secession Church, then one of the largest buildings in the town. On one occasion, at least, the representative of the burgh in Parliament, the Right Honourable Fox Maule, afterwards Lord Panmure and Earl of Dalhousie, presided, and Richard Cobden addressed the large assemblage. There was then no public meeting-place, such as the City Hall, although the proposal was before the Town Council. The Radicals were in favour of the City Hall scheme, while the Tories characterised it as useless and a waste of public money. A Philosophical Society for Perth was formed in 1847, and was named the Andersonian Society, in memory of her eminent citizen, Professor Anderson. But although it flourished for a short time it did not long survive.

During the first half of the nineteenth century the drama flourished in Perth, the theatre being situated in Atholl Street. Ryder was the lessee of the house, and he engaged

high-class actors. Macready frequently acted at Perth, and, indeed, he there met the lady who afterwards became his wife, when she was playing Virginia to his Virginius. Later, comedy seems to have held sway, and "Paddy" Weeks was a great favourite. He died suddenly, and was buried in Perth, where the superintendent of the cemetery, at his own expense, placed a stone to mark the spot, on which is carved simply the name "Weeks."

In 1845 the Magistrates bought the statue of Sir Walter Scott which now stands on the South Inch, at a sale of the works of the brothers Cochrane, who were then about to leave for America. The Cochranes were the sculptors of the statue of Provost T. Hay Marshall which now stands under the portico of his monument. The statue of Robert Burns is from the chisel of William Anderson, another local sculptor, and was placed some years later in a niche in the façade of his house in County Place. The sister art of painting about this time found many patrons, and an Exhibition of Pictures, promoted chiefly by J. M. Barclay, the well-known artist, who was a native of Perth, was shown in the sideroom of the new City Hall.

#### THE DISRUPTION

The religious life of Perth has at all times been active. The ecclesiastical conflict which preceded the secession of the Free Church in 1843 was participated in by a large section of the community, and there were large secessions from four of the churches of the Establishment. The ministers of

Perth at this time were men of exceptional piety in all the different churches, and their memory is still revered. There was a revival of religion about the year 1840, in which many of the clergy worked. The saintly John Milne, then the minister of St. Leonard's Chapel, took an especial interest in this movement.

#### CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND PROSPERITY

The improvements effected in Perth during the second half of the last century have changed the appearance of the town. A good system of drainage has been introduced. New streets have been opened up in the more congested parts. Many churches and public buildings have been rebuilt. Leaving out of count the railway viaduct, a second bridge now spans the Tay. Commodious schools have been erected in every district. Trade has continued prosperous, although the volume of it is moderate when compared with that of other and neighbouring towns. The industries carried on in Perth are numerous, and some of them have reached more than a local fame. The chief industry, however, is that of dyeing, in which a large proportion of the inhabitants are employed. The excellence of the Perth water may have helped to establish this trade, but the energy, business ability, and scientific methods of the captains of this industry have to a very large extent secured this trade to Perth.

The geographical situation of the town in the middle of Scotland has made it an important railway centre. Here the railways from all parts of the country converge. Ample rail-

way facilities have made Perth an important mart for the disposal of farm produce and cattle.

#### BEAUTY OF THE SITUATION OF PERTH

Strangers visiting Perth and arriving by rail, enter the town as it were by the back door, and have to traverse many of the meaner streets before they can see the beauty of the place. The town is best seen from the farther side of the river. Looking down from the slope of Kinnoull Hill, such a view is presented to the eye that the beauty of it remains on the tablets of memory for ever. Such a picture our artist has drawn, and a reproduction is given as a frontispiece to this work.

#### THE NAMES ST. JOHNSTOUN AND FAIR CITY

Perth was frequently called St. Johnstoun from a very early period, probably owing to the fact that the church and bridge were dedicated to St. John the Baptist. In public writs, however, the town has always been designated Perth. The modern poetic name of Perth is "the Fair City." The first writer to use the name "Fair City" was David Morison, in his account of the demolition of the monasteries in the *Scenes in Scotland*, published in 1834. From the title of Sir Walter Scott's novel, *The Fair Maid of Perth*, it would be an easy transition to call the town the Fair City of Perth. Lawson, in his *Book of Perth*, calls the town the Fair City. Marshall, in his *History of Perth*, uses this name occasionally; while Peacock, in his *Annals and Archives*,

published the same year, freely uses the name Fair City, and this appellation is appropriately enough used by most writers since that time.

In this short sketch of Perth much has been left out which might have been said, had space permitted. Perth may well claim to be one of the most up-to-date of provincial towns. It is lighted by electricity, has a system of electric tramways, a public library, churches in plenty, a comfortable theatre, and splendid facilities for sport. The City Hall, which was such a bone of contention when it was proposed and erected, has now waxed old and frail, and the City Fathers propose to rebuild it. St. John's Church, the only pre-Reformation building which the town boasts, was, unlike the City Hall, built for all time. Much has been done to restore it to something like its former grandeur. A complete restoration is much to be desired, when the partitions shall be removed and the church open from choir to nave.

Here we stop at the Parish Church of St. John the Baptist, which from time immemorial has been the centre of Christian life and intellectual activity of the thousands and thousands of citizens who have lived their little day in Perth, the ancient capital of Scotland.

## HENRY ADAMSON

1581-1637

POET-HISTORIAN OF PERTH

AUTHOR OF *THE MUSES' THRENODIE*

OUR author is the literary Father of the Historians of Perth, and the city owes him a debt of gratitude. Yet in these days his memory is somewhat neglected ; his glory has become clouded, and his poems are familiar chiefly to students of antiquity. Possibly a better knowledge of our poet and his work may help to dispel the clouds which obscure the merit of a worthy son of Perth. The few extracts which we give from his works may help to keep green his laurel crown, and bring back to memory the merry poem with the mournful title.

Even in his own day the poet was hardly understood by the ordinary man. His main poem is ignorantly referred to in the minutes of the Town Council of Perth as the book called "Gaw's Tears," "Gaw" being the local pronunciation for Gall, the name of the poet's friend whose death he laments in his threnody. It was his lot also to be misinterpreted by succeeding generations, who read reality in his raptures and fact in his fiction. Yet we cannot blame Adamson, but rather

those on whom his historical but not his poetical mantle had fallen.

Henry Adamson, the author of *The Muses' Threnodie, or Mirthful Mournings on the early Death of his Friend, Mr. John Gall*, was a native of Perth. His great poem is divided into nine "muses" or parts, and is in reality a metrical history of the City of Perth and neighbourhood. He was baptized on the 1st of November 1581 by Mr. Patrick Galloway, the second of the Reformed Ministers of Perth, and subsequently Chaplain to the King. His godfathers (or witnesses) were Oliver Peebles and William Fleming, both of whom were magistrates. His father, James Adamson, was a merchant and citizen of much consequence, who served the town at different times as Bailie, Town Treasurer, Dean of Guild, and for three years he ruled the city as Provost.<sup>1</sup>

The mother of our poet was Margaret Anderson, sister to Henry Anderson, proprietor of the lands of Tillylumb. His maternal uncle was a merchant of Perth and a man of liberal education, having, like the unfortunate Earl of Gowrie, prosecuted his studies in Italy at the celebrated University of Padua. This uncle was an accomplished poet, writing fluently in the Latin tongue, then the language of scholars and men of letters. When King James vi. paid

<sup>1</sup> He filled a Bailie's chair in 1587, 1590, and 1592; was Town's Treasurer in 1594, '95, '96; again he was elected to the Magistracy in 1597. For the years 1598 and 1600 he was Dean of Guild, succeeding his brother, who in those turbulent times came to an untimely end. He was Dean of Guild at the time when Perth's young Provost, the Earl of Gowrie, lost his life in what has been called the Gowrie Conspiracy.

a state visit to Perth in 1617 he was addressed in a Latin poem, the composition of Henry Anderson. He is always designated *Mr.* Henry Anderson, this title being in those days, and for long after, used to distinguish Masters in Art. Like his brother-in-law (the father of our poet) he was actively engaged in municipal affairs, and ruled the city as a Magistrate in 1611-12. Altogether Henry Anderson was a citizen of whom Perth had good reason to be proud. He and his nephew are lauded in a short poem, entitled, "In Perth anent two of her Sons, her two Suns Mr. Henry Anderson and Mr. Henry Adamson his Nephew":

"Two Henries, like two suns upon thee rose,  
The Uncle and the Nephew, and did close,  
The one a summer, th' other a winter day,  
Nor longer could on our horizon stay.  
With home-bred beams, the one on thee did shine,  
Th' other with rays brought from the coast Lavine.  
But herein these excell fair Phœbus' brother,  
He and his beams do rise and set together:  
Their rays shine most, themselves when under earth,  
And shall perpetual splendor give to Perth:  
So be it ay, upon thee, Noble Town,  
May many such suns rise, and so go down."

These lines are initialed J. A., and are the composition of the poet's elder brother John, who from his eminence in literature deserves some mention.

John Adamson was born in 1576; he received a liberal education, taking the M.A. degree of his university. In early life he acted as Regent in Edinburgh College. Afterwards he successively held the charges of North Berwick, and

Liberton, near Edinburgh. He was a distinguished man, and well known as a Latin poet. He collected and published the poems addressed to the king during his state progress in Scotland in 1617. He also edited the Latin poems of his friend, the celebrated Andrew Melville. In 1623 came to him the great prize of his life, when he was appointed Principal of the University of Edinburgh, and at the same time he became colleague to Mr. Andrew Murray, minister of the Greyfriars Church there.

Possibly Henry Adamson was, like his brother, designed to serve God and his generation as a minister of the Gospel, but if so, he did not prosecute his studies in that direction. He certainly received the best education his country could give, and that was then perhaps the best in the world. Scotland was then famous for learning; her scholars were known and filled high positions in all the universities of the civilised world. Adamson is described in the dedication of his poem as a "student in divine and human learning." Our poet-historian was thus, as we have seen, born in the municipal purple, which would no doubt be a help to him in his start in life. The Town Council was then a close corporation: a free election was unknown—the retiring council practically elected its successor; it was then the days of what has since been ironically called the "beautiful order," which continued until the reform of the last century.

Henry Adamson sprung from a family of poets. His paternal uncle, Archbishop Patrick Adamson, was a poet, and, as we have seen, his maternal uncle and his brother

were poets. We are not so well able to judge the merits of the poetry of his relatives, as they wrote their verses in Latin, but it is fortunate for us, and also for himself, that he wrote his great work in English. Like many great men, it was long before he found his vocation and got settled in life. To an outsider he may have seemed to be mooning his life away ; but this was not so, he was unconsciously fitting himself for the work he was called to do.

In 1617, Mr. Thomas Garvy held the office of “uptaker of the Psalms” in the Parish Church of St. John of Perth. Being stricken in years, he was neither “apt nor able” for the duties of his office, consequently his place had been for some time supplied by Henry Adamson. The Session and Council, who held the patronage of this appointment, had such a high opinion of the qualifications of the assistant that he was asked to continue his services. Henry was now thirty-six years of age, and was naturally desirous of having some settled employment.

At this time his brother, then minister of Liberton, having written him regarding a situation suitable for him, and this being intimated to the authorities, the Session and Council formally appointed him to fill the office of Precentor and Master of the Sang School, which offices he retained until his death. This office of singing master was one of greater consequence and honour than is now attached to it. Music was then considered an important branch of education, and the Sang School of Perth was an old and much appreciated seminary.

In 1620 he married Katherine Buchanan, generally recog-

nised as a daughter of the minister of Methven.<sup>1</sup> An old tombstone in the Greyfriars' burial-ground records the death of his wife, but it is so worn by the ravages of time that the year of her death cannot be ascertained. Many years ago the painstaking local historian, R. S. Fittis, copied the inscription on this stone, which he published in his *Perthshire Memorabilia*, as follows : "Heir Lyeth Katharin Bvchanan, Daughter to M. William Bvchanan, and Spouse to M. Henry Adamson. Obit 10 Novemb . . . Hora. Vesp."

Mr. Fittis continues : "The Coats-of-Arms are in the centre. First the Adamson arms—a shield charged with a star between two cross-crosslets, and a cross moline beneath, distinguished by the initials M. H. A.; and next, a shield displaying the Buchanan cognisance, a lion rampant sable within a double tressure, and flanked by the initials K. B."

Shortly after his appointment to the mastership of the "Sang" School he succeeded (3rd May 1620) to another office in the Kirk of Perth, namely, that of reader. It was the duty of this official to read in the church, before the sermon, portions of Scripture, and prayers from John Knox's Book of Common Order. In many churches where there was no regular minister settled, all the religious service which the people had was that which was supplied by the reader.

Peacock records, that "notwithstanding our poet's profession, respectable connection, and fair character, it appears in the same Register (Hospital Register) that he was subject

<sup>1</sup> See *The Provostry of Methven*.

to human frailties, for by the minute of the 7th June 1621, we find he had been suspended on account of certain amatory liaisons with a fair maid named Marjory Runciman." The minute referred to states that a meeting of the Town Council and the Church Session was held for the purpose of deliberating anent Adamson's re-entry. The poet having expressed his contrition, was duly admonished and readmitted to his office of reader. From the very slight knowledge which is furnished by the minute of his offence, we are unable to judge of the measure of his guilt. Marshall, in his *History*, makes no mention of this incident. The Church of those days was especially severe in all cases of moral delinquency, and its discipline was exercised without fear or favour. Every offence was then brought to the light of day, and the "Cutty Stool" was an institution. We are not more moral than were our fathers: only, our transgressions are heard and judged more in private.

Judging from his writings, it is evident that our poet was blessed with an amiable disposition, yet withal he had a temper of his own. In the Session Minutes for the year 1623 an incident is recorded which, although of a somewhat vulgar nature, throws a sidelight on his character, and enables us in some measure to estimate the man. He had quarrelled with a fellow-townsman named Thomas Wilson, whom he called a "deboished dyvour," that is, a debauched bankrupt, but with what truth we know not. Thomas, on his part, did not deny the charge, but retorted that were it not for his office of "reader" he would "thraw his nose." It is

pleasant to record that the parties were reconciled by the Session, and that they took each other by the hand.

In March 1626 he is recorded as Clerk of the Presbytery of Perth. "The former Buk of the Presbyterie was deliveryt to him by Mr. John Cruickshank" at that time, but he seems to have been acting in this capacity for some time before this date. He was one of the few laymen who have held the office of Presbytery Clerk.

In those days holidays, as we now understand them, were not known, although our regularly recurring vacations take their name from the Holy or Saint's days established by the early Church. However, we learn from the records of the Town Council that Adamson received a license of six days in order to visit his brother, Mr. John Adamson, the Principal of the University of Edinburgh, then lying sick. We have no further account of this visit to his brother, but doubtless he would show him his poems, and the brothers would have a happy time together. *The Muses' Threnodie* is supposed to have been finished in 1620, but it was subsequently revised. The poet was loth to give it to the world. His false modesty had well-nigh lost to Perth the labours of her earliest historian. As he says in his apology :

". . . I do protest, against my will,  
These lines were reft from under my rude quill.  
I never did intend so great a height,  
That they should touch the press or come to light."

Let us consider, before entering on an examination of the poems, the times in which Adamson lived and wrote. In the

early part of the seventeenth century the English tongue, especially in Scotland, had hardly formed itself into a language. Spenser (1553-99) was not so long dead. Shakespeare (1564-1616) and Bacon (1561-1626) may be said to have been his contemporaries. King James' authorised edition of the Bible was published in 1611, and the first edition of Shakespeare's works in 1623. Without doubt Adamson would be familiar with the Holy Scriptures as we know them, but the poem was finished before he could have read the printed message of the great dramatist. The Cavalier poets, foremost amongst whom was Sir William Drummond of Hawthornden, lived and wrote partly in his time. The authorised edition of the Bible and the printed page of Shakespeare—these two especially—were the forces at work making the English language the powerful factor it has since become. This, then, was the time when our poet was engaged in the work which was to be the boast of Perth and the monument of the author to future generations.

In criticising this man's life-work it would not be fair to apply to it the modern standard of English verse—rather let us look at it as far as possible from the standpoint of a contemporary writer, and see it with the eyes of the celebrated Sir William Drummond. Fortunately we are in a position to do this to some extent, for the manuscript had been submitted to this eminent critic and truly great poet. In the first edition of *The Muses' Threnodie* is published a letter from his friend Drummond, which is sufficient to put away all doubt as to the propriety of publishing the poems.

Adamson did not live to read the friendly message of his brother poet, and it is certain that he died without having the satisfaction of handling the printed volume of his work.<sup>1</sup>

This letter of Drummond's, then possibly the greatest of living poets (Milton was alive and a young man, but he had not come to his fame), is as follows:

"TO MY WORTHY FRIEND, MR. HENRY ADAMSON.

"SIR,—These papers of your mournings on Mr. Gall appear unto me as Alcibiadis Silenti, which ridiculously look with the faces of Sphinges, Chimearas, Centaurs on their outsides, but inwardlie containe rare artifice, and rich jewels of all sorts, for the delight and weal of man. They may deservedlie bear the word, non intus ut extra.<sup>2</sup> Your two champions, noble zanys (buffoons), discover to us many of the antiquities of this country, more of your ancient town of Perth, setting downe her situation, founders, her huge colosse or bridge, walls, fousies, aqueducts, fortifications, temples, monasteries, and many other singularities. Happie hath Perth been in such a citizen, not so other townes of this kingdome, by want of so diligent a searcher and preserver of their fame from oblivion. Some Muses, neither to themselves nor to others, do good, nor delighting nor

<sup>1</sup> On March 24, 1637, the Perth Presbytery appointed a clerk in room of Henry Adamson, deceased. *The Muses' Threnodie* was published in 1638.

<sup>2</sup> Not what it appears.

instructing. Yours perform both, and longer to conceal them will be to wrong your Perth of her due honours, who deserveth no less of you than that she should be thus blazoned and registrate to posterity, and to defraud yourself of a monument which, after you have left this transitory world, shall keep your name and memory to after times. This shall be preserved by the towne of Perth for her own sake first, and after for yours; for to her it hath been no little glory that she hath brought forth such a citizen, so eminent in love to her, so dear to the Muses.

"EDINBURGH, July 12, 1637."

It is evident from this warm letter of the great poet and public man that he thought very highly of Adamson's work, and few men of his day were better able to judge.

It is curious to note that Drummond found leisure to write his friend at this time. He was actively engaged in the politics of the day, and even as he writes the storm was brewing which was to burst eleven days later in the church at Edinburgh, when the famous Jenny Geddes threw her stool at the minister. In the king's controversy with the people, Drummond took a moderate yet bold part.

*The Muses' Threnodic* was published in 1638, when the author's brother, John Adamson, the Principal of the University of Edinburgh, was of great assistance in seeing the work through the press. It was printed at Edinburgh, in King James' College, by George Anderson. From the Records of the Town Council of Perth we learn that the Principal

received an allowance from the Council for a book to be published.

On the 21st August 1637 instructions were given for “putting a person on trial to read the Psalms in the Parish Kirk.” Again, on the 27th November 1637, the question was discussed by the Council as to whether the book called “Gaw’s Tears” should be dedicated to the Magistrates and Town Council, or to the recently ennobled (1633) Earl of Kinnoull.<sup>1</sup> The exact date of Adamson’s death is unknown, but it is reasonable to conclude that he had died prior to the discussion in the Council as to whom the book should be dedicated, for had he been alive there required to be no discussion on such a point. The original dedication was allowed to remain, than which nothing could be better or more appropriate.

“To His Native Town of Perth, The Lord Provost, Bailies, and Council thereof, his worthy Patrons; wishing them all happiness here and hence, Dedicateth these his Recreations.—Their devoted Servant,

“HENRY ADAMSON,  
“Student in Divine and Human Learning.”

This book was a work of love. It was written in the first place to keep alive the memory of his very dear friend, Mr. John Gall, a young man of much promise, intelligence, learning, and wit, who died of consumption. John Gall was a merchant in Perth, as was his father of the same name.

<sup>1</sup> See note *ante*, p. 47.

Mr. George Ruthven, another friend of the poet's, is represented as the Mourner. He was a physician in Perth, and is supposed to have been a son of Patrick, third Lord Ruthven. He was then an old man, and according to Mr. Fittis was born in 1546. *Noscitur a sociis*—a man is often correctly judged by his company. Having such good friends as this esteemed physician and Mr. John Gall, we are the more assured of the good character of our historian. No man is free from the frailties of humanity, and our poet would have been more than mortal had he been without fault. There is one thought which must strike the reader of his verses, and that is the chasteness of his style and the nobility of his thoughts.

On the 12th February 1638 there was presented to the Town Council thirty copies of *The Muses' Threnodie*, which were distributed amongst the members. The whole edition would not be large, at anyrate an original copy is now a treasure. Only one copy of the first edition is known to exist, and even it has the title page supplied. This copy was sold some years ago for five guineas. Another copy of this work, published in 1773,<sup>1</sup> is in our possession. It is unique, being “printed at Perth by George Johnston to the 52nd page, the remainder wrote by Perthsensis.”

The first and principal title of the main poem is *The Muses' Threnodie*, that is, the Tears of the Muses; and the second title is *Mirthful Mournings on the Death of Mr. Gall*. After the dedication comes the first poem; it is called an “Inventory of the Gabions, or curiosities in Mr. George

<sup>1</sup> The year before Cant published his edition.

Ruthven's Closet or Cabinet," some of which are real and some imaginary.

This poem opens thus :

"Of uncouth forms and wond'rous shapes,  
Like peacocks, and like Indian apes ;  
Like leopards, and beasts spotted,  
Of clubs curiously knotted ;  
Of wond'rous workmanships and rare,  
Like eagles flying in the air ;  
Like Centaurs, Mermaids in the seas ;  
Like Dolphins, and like honey bees ;  
Some carv'd in timber, some in stone  
Of the wonder of Albion ;  
Which this close cabin doth include,  
Some portends ill, some presage good."

This is a good opening ; the meter is correct, and the rhymes jingle merrily. The poet's description of the wonders, real and imaginary, of the ancient physician's museum, reminds us of Burns' lines on Captain Grose, the antiquary :

"He has a fouth o' auld nick-nackets :  
Rusty ain caps and jinglin' jackets."

The later poet is more vigorous ; but the earlier poet, contrary to expectation, is more chaste. This introductory poem especially evinces a thorough knowledge of ancient mythology, which is hard to understand by the ordinary modern reader, unless assisted by notes. He concludes this long poem of 172 lines as follows :

"This is his storehouse, and his treasure,  
This is his paradise of pleasure,

This is the arsenal of gods,  
Of all the world this is the odds ;  
This is the place Apollo chuscs,  
This is the residence of the Muses,  
And to conclude all this in one,  
This is the Roman Pantheon.”

The next piece is an apology by the author, written in a longer measure, from which we should like to quote, but must refrain. In truth, this apology is quite heroic, and the closing couplet—

“Trusting in God to keep my conscience pure,  
Whose favours most of all shall me secure,”

breathes a fine spirit.

Then follows an elegy on the early death of the author, written in Latin by Thomas Crawford, headmaster of the High School of Edinburgh, and afterwards a Regent or Professor in the College there.

We now come to the great poem. It is written in nine divisions or “muses,” corresponding to the nine Muses. The Muses were specially invoked by the older poets to assist them in their labours. They were nine imaginary heathen deities, namely, Clio, Urania, Calliope, Euterpe, Erato, Thalia, Melpomene, Terpsichore, and Polyhymnia, fabled to be the daughters of Jupiter, and accredited by the heathen philosophers as the goddesses of Music and Poetry. From the last-named come our words Hymn and Hymnary.

The introduction is contained in four lines :

“Of Mr. George Ruthven the tears and mournings,  
Amidst the giddie course of fortune’s turnings,  
Upon his dear friend’s death, Mr. John Gall,  
Where his rare ornaments beare part and wretched Gabions all.”

From this introduction it would appear that the poem was written by Mr. George Ruthven ; but although put in his name, this was not so : the *muses* were undoubtedly written by Henry Adamson. In the first muse the poet calls on all his “Gabions”<sup>1</sup> to help him to mourn the death of his friend Gall, and he sets forth at length his many virtues. First he calls on his

then— “Bowes to begin the doleful song ;”

“And ye my clubs, you must no more prepare,  
To make your balls flee whistling in the air,  
But hing your heads and crookèd craigs,  
And dress you all in sackcloth and in rags.”

Next in order he calls on his “loadstones of Lednochian lakes”; that is, his curling stones, then found in great abundance in Lednoch on the Almond River near Perth. The poet praises the men of Perth for their skill in “noble archerie,” and then follows an account of a shooting excursion “alongst the flowery banks of Tay to Almond.” He views the place where ancient Bertha stood, and tells in verse Hector Boece’s fabled story, which he evidently believes, as indeed it was held as true by many for long after,

<sup>1</sup> Gabions, a word of Adamson’s own coining, frequently used by Sir Walter Scott in his diary.

notwithstanding the clear account of the inundation given by Fordoun, who wrote about a hundred years after the event.

From Bertha they proceed to “Low’s Wark,” about which he has a great deal to say. Thence they walked along by the banks of the town’s lade or aqueduct to the “Boot of Bousie”; then they viewed Balhousie Castle and the North Inch, when the poet gives a long account of the Battle of the Inch and Perth’s valiant citizen “Henrie Wynde.” His next subject is the Blackfriars’ Monastery and the murder of King James I., from which by a natural transition he goes on to describe the Carthusian Monastery which was founded by that unfortunate king.

In descriptive poetry he excels, and his description of the Carthusian Monastery is good :

“The Charterhouse of Perth a mighty frame,  
 Vallis Virtutis by a mystic name,  
 Looking along that painted spacious field,  
 Which doth with pleasure sweetly yield,  
 The fair South Inch of Perth and banks of Tay,  
 This Abbey’s steeples; and its turrets stay,  
 While as they stood (but ah! where sins abound,  
 The loftiest pride lies level’d with the ground!)  
 Were cunningly contriv’d with curious art,  
 And quintessence of skill in every part.”

The first muse concludes as it began, with a lament for Gall. These laments are generally the least poetical parts of his poem :

“Which makes me cry,  
 Gall, sweetest Gall, what ailed thec to die.”

The second muse, which is not quite so long as the first, is descriptive of a trip to Luncarty and the Linn of Campsie ; while in the third muse, the voyagers' return to Perth by water, and the broken bridge, is described. In this division of the poem we find an imaginative sketch of the coming of the Romans to Perth, in which occurs the first conception of the supposed exclamation of the Romans on coming in sight of the situation of Perth : “Ecce Tiber! Ecce Campus Martius!” Behold the Tiber! Behold the field of Mars!

Speaking of the Romans, here is what Adamson says :

“And there, hard by a river-side they found  
The fairest and most pleasant plat of ground,  
That since by bank of Tiber they had been,  
The like for beauty seldom had they seen :

. . . . .  
Which when they did espy,  
In continent they *Campus Martius* cry.  
And as an happie presage they had seen,  
They fix their tents amidst that spacious green.  
Right where now Perth doth stand, and cast their trenches  
Even where Perth's fowsies are, between these inches,  
The South and North, and bastilies they make,  
The power and strength of Scots and Pights to break.”

These seeds of fancy lay dormant until about 1757, when the spurious account of the situation of Britain (*de Situ Britanniae*), ascribed to Richard of Cirencester, was published, which strengthened the claim of Perth to have a Roman origin. Then in 1769, Pennant, the celebrated traveller, writes : “The inhabitants of Perth are far from being blind to the beauties of their river ; for with singular pleasure they

relate the tradition of the Roman army, when it came in sight of the Tay, bursting into the exclamation of ‘Ecce Tiberius.’”

This is the first appearance in print of “Ecce,” but the reference of Adamson to the “Campus Martius” is not referred to. James Cant, who published his edition of *The Muses’ Threnodie* in 1774, speaks of the account of the Romans viewing Perth and settling there as a poetical fable; but, notwithstanding, the fable gained ground. In 1786 was published the *Old Statistical Account of Perth*, in which the writer sums up his account of the foundation of Perth in these words: “When Agricola and his army first saw the river Tay, and the adjacent plain on which Perth is now situated, they cried out with one consent, “Ecce Tiber! Ecce Campus Martius!” comparing what they saw to their own river, and the extensive plain in the neighbourhood of Rome.

In the *Memorabilia of Perth*, published in 1806, the statement is repeated in other words. The tradition has up to this point gathered considerable strength, and seems to have been fully accepted in Perth. It only remained for Sir Walter Scott to bring it before the world, which he did in the professedly anonymous lines which head the first chapter of his famous story of *The Fair Maid of Perth*:

“Behold the Tiber! the vain Roman cried,  
Viewing the ample Tay from Baiglie’s side;  
But where’s the Scot that would the vaunt repay,  
And hail the puny Tiber for the Tay.”

Perth may have been founded by the Romans, as this tradition would have us believe, but there are no grounds for

saying that such was the fact. No such account is to be found in Tacitus or any classical writer.<sup>1</sup> For how the poet tells of the Battle of the Bridge of Perth, of the death of the Martyrs, of the Reformation, and of the destruction of the monasteries, and many other subjects of interest in our history, we must refer the reader to the poem itself. In the sixth muse we have an account of a sail down the river from Perth in the early morning :

“Then merrielie we leanche into the deep,  
Phœbus meanwhile awak’ned rose from sleep,  
At his appointed houre, the pleasant morning,  
With gilded beames the cristall streams adorning:  
The pearly dew on tender grasse did hing,  
And heavenly quires of birds did sweetlie sing:  
Down by the sweet South Inche we sliding go,  
Ten thousand dangling diamonds did show  
The radiant repercussion of Sol’s rayes  
And spreading showers did looke like Argus eyes.”

The reader who reads through this long poem will come on long passages of dreary doggerel. We have not thought it wise to reproduce the worst, but rather we have chosen the best; and this last quotation, notwithstanding its antique setting, is quite charming.

The ninth and last muse tells of the death of Master Gall, and concludes thus :

“Then farewell, Cabine; farewell, Gabions all,  
Then must I meet in heaven with Master Gall:

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<sup>1</sup> See article by the late James Macdonald in *The Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol. 1898–99.

And till that time I will set forth his praise,  
In elegies of wo and mourning layes ;  
And, weeping for his sake, still will I cry,  
Gall, sweetest Gall, what aileſ thee to dye.”

Notwithstanding the merit of his verses, it is much to be regretted that Adamson did not write the History of Perth in matter-of-fact prose. Having written in verse, he has taken the usual license of a poet, and many of his statements must be accepted as fictitious and fanciful. Still, amidst all the wealth of his fancy, he has given us much that is true and reliable. His work is the earliest, and for long it was the only, account of the antiquities of Perth and its neighbourhood. As a poet he is far inferior to his friend Drummond ; but he is much superior to many who have attained greater popularity. His style may be called Hudibrastic, although he lived and wrote before Samuel Butler composed his humorous satire on the English Presbyterians. His lines, like those of Hudibras, are often slipshod and his numbers uneven, but they are free from the vulgarity of Butler. Adamson wrote of and for a locality, hence his fame is circumscribed. He was a true son of Perth, and sung of his native city. He was a man of learning, taste, and wit ; in a word, he was a poet. He could not soar in flights of fervour like the great poets, but he was too sensible to think more of his work than it deserved. Unlike most poets, his modesty was as remarkable as his genius.

## JAMES CANT

ANTIQUARY

EDITOR OF THE SECOND EDITION OF  
*THE MUSES' THRENODIE*, PERTH, 1774

OF the personal history of James Cant, the editor of the second edition of *The Muses' Threnodie*, little is known. He was a Government official, holding the position of surveyor of H.M. Customs at Perth. Not only was he a well-educated man, he was an eminent scholar well read in the Greek and Latin classics, and consequently well qualified to appreciate and edit Henry Adamson's famous poem. For forty years he was an elder or teacher of the Glassite Congregation of Perth, and towards the close of his life he occupied the same position in connection with that religious body at Dunkeld, where he is supposed to have carried on the business of bookseller and glazier.

Having said this much, it seems unnecessary to add that he was an earnest-minded man and a sincere Christian, much loved by his co-religionists, and respected by all with whom he came in contact. He was married, and his wife was an active helpmate to him in his Church work (1758). Both he and she were given to hospitality, a virtue still much practised by that small Church which has given so many eminent sons

to Scotland. James Cant contributed four hymns or songs to the volume of *Christian Songs* used by the Glassite Church at their social gatherings, but they are not of much poetical merit. He had a brother, William Cant, also a member of the Glassite Church, which included many eminent men in the social and religious life of Perth. At this time George Miller, the Town Clerk of Perth, was a member of this Church, and he was familiarly known amongst the brethren as "the clerk." Much of the activity of Cant's long life, outside his official work, was spent in the service of God and the Church he loved so well. As he advanced in years he seems to have given much attention to the study of the past, and in his day was an antiquary of some note. He was generous in his service to other writers, notably to Robert Mylne of London, whose great-grandson, the Rev. Robert Scott Mylne of Great Amwell, completed, edited, and published, so late as 1893, *The Master Masons to the Crown of Scotland*, a work the material for which had been gathering for generations.

In the year 1772 there flourished a local periodical with the title of *The Perth Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*. James Cant soon became a valued contributor to this early harbinger of the glorious summer of magazines which we now enjoy. Cant made this journal the vehicle for the announcement of his intention to republish *The Muses' Threnodie* of Henry Adamson, with notes and observations. The republication was indeed begun in the *Magazine*, but evidently not to the satisfaction of Cant. The *Magazine* having ceased to exist with the number dated 24th December 1773, the way

was now clear for our author to issue his edition of *The Muses' Threnodie*.

Accordingly, in the following year was published the second edition of *The Muses' Threnodie*, with notes and appendices. This edition is the work which gives Cant a place amongst our local historians, although we feel assured he never would have claimed that position for himself. The work, although published in two octavo volumes, is generally found bound in one volume, and often with only the first title page. The only illustration is a plan of the town of Perth, taken from an actual survey by A. Rutherford,<sup>1</sup> dated 1774, and engraved by J. Kirkwood, watchmaker, Perth. Rutherford is also the etcher of a drawing of St. John's Church, Perth, as it appeared in 1775, and which was published in *Sconiana*, 1807. The engraver of this interesting map, James Kirkwood, died at Edinburgh on the 19th of January 1827, at the ripe old age of eighty-one years. He is designated as formerly watchmaker and engraver in Perth.

This plan of the town bears an impression of the arms of Perth. It is a spirited drawing, but the eagle is represented, contrary to the usual custom, as single-headed instead of double.<sup>2</sup> The town then occupied a much more limited area than it does to-day. Smeaton's Bridge, then and still the great boast of Perth, had only been open to the public for three years. George Street, so named after King George

<sup>1</sup> Archibald Rutherford, who was the drawing master in the then recently established Perth Academy.

<sup>2</sup> This design of the Perth arms was used by the town clerk.

III., the best of his name, had only been recently formed, and was not nearly all built. Where the now Royal George Hotel stands, was then vacant ground. Charlotte Street, which was to commemorate the name of the queen, was not then made. The principal streets were High Street, South Street, Watergate, Kirkgate, Castle Gable, part of Princes Street, Mill Wynd, and New Row. The last-named, although still bearing its up-to-date designation, is really a very old street. The Meal Vennel was then an important thoroughfare. Mill Street is indicated but not named. Canal Street, or the line of it, which was also the line of the city wall, is called Spy Ridge ; while beyond, to the south, are the Spy and Hospital Gardens. The outline of Cromwell's Fort on the South Inch is shown ; the Edinburgh Road, with its avenue of trees, intersecting it close to the west side. The course of the Dunkeld Road is marked intersecting the North Inch. Of churches, there is of course the Parish Church of St. John, all the others being designated meeting-houses, namely, the Episcopal, situated in the Parliament Close ; the Burgher, now the Wilson U.F. Church ; and the Anti-Burgher, now the North U.F. Church. The last two have recently been rebuilt on nearly the same sites. The Congregational Meeting-House completes the list of churches. The Grammar School is shown occupying its time immemorial site at the end of the School Vennel, now known as St. Anne's Lane ; while the Academy was situated at the north-west corner of the Kirk-side. The Town Hall occupied the site at the foot of the High Street, having the back to the river and the front

looking up the street. The present Commissioner's Hall and Public Offices are built on the site of St. Mary's Chapel, an old building which existed then, but was not used as a chapel. The present Guild Hall in High Street is the same building as figures in the plan of 1774. There is also a bank situated between the Kirkgate and the Watergate. As showing how the citizens were employed, there is indicated the Mill Wynd Factory, the New Row Factory, and a leather manufactory. There was also a snuff mill, an oil mill, a barley mill, and the town's meal mills. The Post Office was situated in a shop in High Street, looking up George Street. King James VI.'s Hospital was then a new building, and it stood almost alone in its neighbourhood. There were but a few houses built on the line of that old approach to the town from the south, the Leonard Causeway, now Leonard Street. The Gowrie House was then in existence, and was occupied as artillery barracks.

Such was Perth in 1774, when James Cant, following the example set in the first edition of *The Muses' Threnodie*, dedicated the second edition to the then Lord Provost, Sheriff, and Coroner; the Dean of Guild, Magistrates, and Town Council.

He begins with an introduction, which enables the reader better to understand the poems which follow, and gives some account of the author, Henry Adamson, and his friends Dr. George Ruthven and Mr. John Gall, who are the speakers introduced in the course of the threnody. There are several inaccuracies in Cant's account of the poet, whom he represents as having died unmarried the year after his poems were

published. In both of these statements Cant is in error. Adamson's wife was named Katherine Buchanan, and was a daughter of the minister of the parish of Methven. She presumably predeceased her husband, for he erected a monument to her memory in the Greyfriars' burial-ground, but unfortunately the date of her death is indecipherable. Then as regards the date of the poet's death, we learn from a minute of the Presbytery of Perth, dated 24th March 1637, that "because of the death of Mr. Henry Adamsone, last clerk of the Presbyterie, it is appointed that in time coming ane actual minister sal be chosen clerk." Cant gives some account of Patrick Adamson, Archbishop of St. Andrews, but he does not say he was uncle to the poet. He also refers to John Adamson, Principal of the University of Edinburgh, but makes no mention of his near relationship, that of brother, to our poet. Cant's notes and appendices to this edition of *The Muses' Threnodie* constitute his claim to be ranked as a local historian. He certainly has brought together a great mass of material, which, properly digested, might have served for a history of Perth. His notes are of great value, more especially when he writes from his own knowledge, although sometimes they are trivial enough. Other of his memoranda are valuable, and pat illustrations from ancient writings; but the major part of his notes consists of quotations from the historians of Scotland, who, having romanced somewhat themselves, have led both the poet and his annotator into error.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hector Boece, especially, may be cited as giving a fictitious account of the inundation and destruction of Perth, in which he is followed by Buchanan

Some of the errors into which Cant has fallen in his notes he corrects in his Introduction. Where he criticises the poem he is generally just, and often appreciative. In his notes he has, of course, to follow the poem, which, treating as it does of a series of excursions in and around Perth, has, as a matter of fact, no chronological sequence. Cant's notes, thus taken by themselves, form a sort of patchwork travesty of the History of Perth. Adamson's poem was never intended to carry such a load of the weighty facts of history, and while we must acknowledge the value of the notes, we cannot but recognise that they distract the attention of the reader of the poem. This method of writing notes to an old poem is a way of writing history which bears a striking relation to mending an old garment with new cloth, or the putting of new wine into old bottles. It is much to be regretted that James Cant did not write a new history of Perth. His notes and appendices testify that he was well qualified for this task, and to succeeding writers his material has been a veritable storehouse. He has collected quite a museum of notes, nearly as wonderful as the "Gabions" of Dr. Ruthven, described by Adamson in the "Inventory."

The first volume concludes with Appendix No. I., the subject of which is the Gowrie Conspiracy, that mysterious and unfortunate transaction about which so much has been written and so little is known. This article is ascribed to Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes. Cant adds some extracts from Calderwood's and Robertson's *Histories*.

Cant's second volume opens with Appendix No. II., which consists of a translation of the Town's Charter of Confirmation granted by King James vi. in 1581, and done into English by John Davidson, Notary Public, in 1653—a long document, which extends to fifty-nine pages of his book. Then follows a list of the Magistrates of Perth for the years 1374 and 1465, and regularly thereafter up to 1773, with such occurrences as happened under their Magistracy. This list of names is extracted from the public records of the town. The footnotes which Cant supplies to this list are of great value. When noticing the laying of the foundation stone of the bridge in 1766, our author gives an interesting list of the subscribers to this great undertaking. The next list which Cant gives us is one of the Ministers of Perth from the Reformation to his time, with some account of each. A short account is given of the Academy of Perth, which was established in 1760. The curriculum of the academy is given. This institution was afterwards joined with the more ancient Grammar School of Perth, a list of the rectors of which, so far as is known, is also printed. James Cant concludes his interesting collection of Perth memoranda with a short postscript, in which he takes leave of the public in as modest a way as in his introduction he first makes his bow to his fellow-citizens.

The following paragraphs, taken from James Cant's account of the conclusion of the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745, are interesting, and give a good idea of the style of this writer :

"Lord George Murray, the best general and statesman among them, and Lord John Drummond, came to Perth, where they had a magazine of powder, and some field-pieces, which they ordered to be spiked up, and the cannon-ball to be thrown in the river. The whole citizens were greatly alarmed by a report that they designed to blow up the magazine lodged in a cellar below the Tolbooth, which was full of prisoners taken from the *Hayard* sloop at Montrose, and from the royal army.

"John Anderson, merchant, by his prudence and interest with Lord George Murray, who had feelings of humanity and a regard for the town, prevented the execution of the barbarous design, which was, perhaps falsely, attributed to Lord John Drummond. Mr. Anderson bought the powder, and Lord George Murray went himself and set the prison doors open, gave the common men money, and advised them to keep out of the way of any of their small parties marching through Perth. The Duke followed the rebels, came into Perth with the army, rested a few days, and marched thro' Aberdeen to Culloden Muir, where he engaged the rebel army on April 16th, and put an end to the rebellion by a total defeat of their army. It is not to be doubted that the exasperated soldiery, without the orders or knowledge of his Royal Highness, stained their laurels by inhumanity, and that many innocent persons suffered the most cruel hardship with the guilty. The operations by fire and sword were not alwise warranted by necessity, and were complained of even by the best friends of the Government."

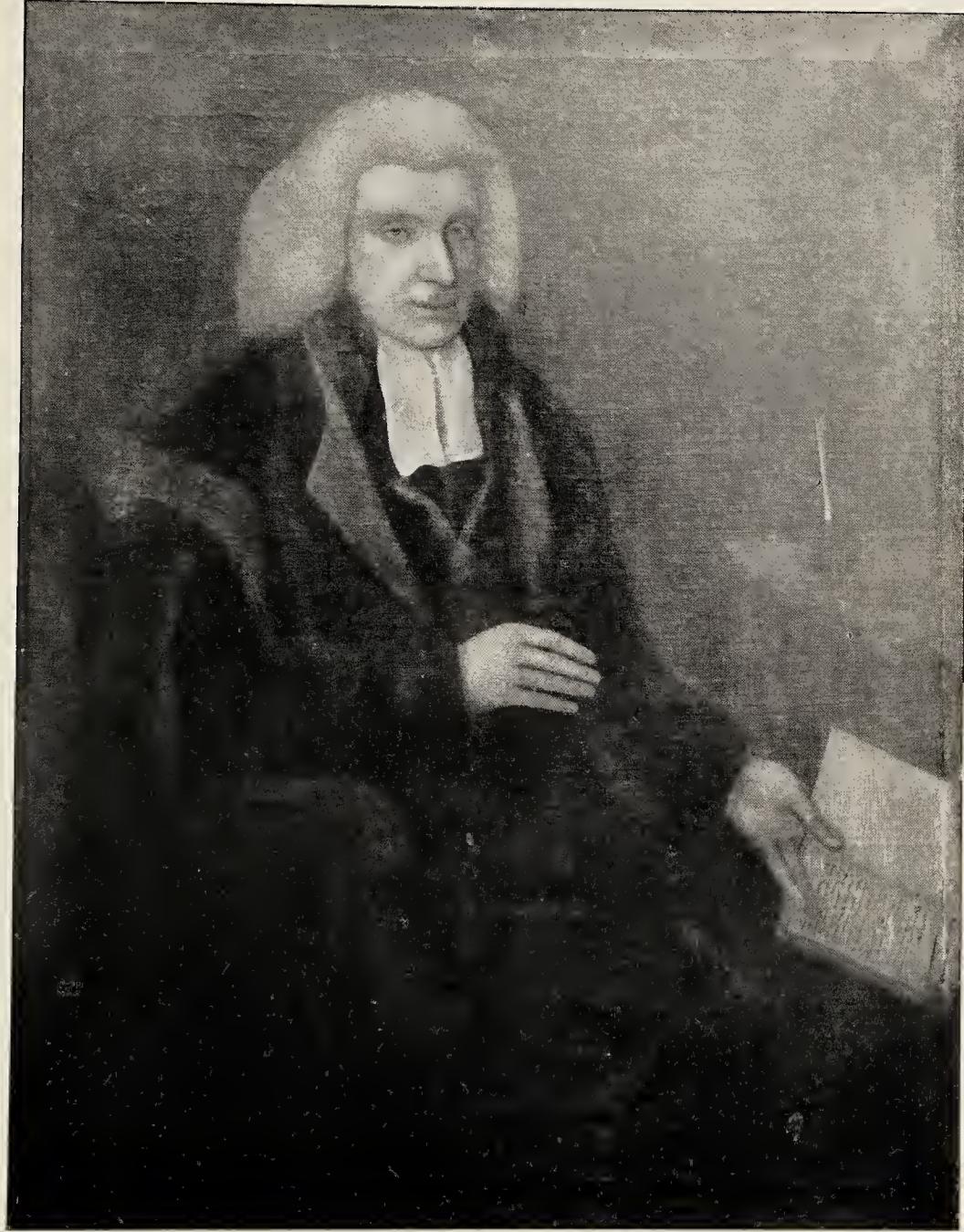
## REV. JAMES SCOTT

1733-1818

ANTIQUARY, HISTORICAL WRITER

THE Rev. James Scott, the senior minister of the parish of Perth, filled a large sphere of usefulness in his day ; yet his valuable services to the town are now to a great extent forgotten. We hope that this little sketch of his life may be effectual in reviving the interest of the present generation in one who was a good citizen, a faithful minister of the Gospel, a careful translator of the ancient records of Perth, and a diligent recorder of its local history.

Scott wrote much, but he published little. Fortunately, however, for us, his manuscript writings have found a safe resting-place in the Advocates of Scotland Library in Edinburgh, where they may be consulted. These consist of several large folio volumes of extracts from the Church records, with remarks and illustrations ; extracts from the register of the Kirk-Session of Perth ; register of deaths, baptisms, and marriages at Perth ; and superstitious customs at Perth. Part of this valuable collection we have examined, and our only regret is that these records have not long ere



REV. JAMES SCOTT,  
1733-1818,  
MINISTER OF PERTH.



this been published *in extenso*. The manuscripts are well bound, while the writing is clear and distinct, and as easily read as a printed page. They contain a mass of information, which has been freely made use of by subsequent writers.

We are indebted for many of the facts of Scott's long life to an account of him, published after his death, by the Rev. W. A. Thomson, D.D., the first minister of the then newly constituted Middle Parish. As this little book is now out of print and exceedingly scarce, we gladly avail ourselves of all the assistance it is so well fitted to render. The Rev. James Scott was the third son of Robert Scott, Esquire, of Falmask, in the county of Roxburgh. He was born near Hawick, on the 21st of November 1733. He received his education at the High School of Edinburgh, and at the University of the same city. He was blessed with a pious mother, who early directed his thoughts to serious things; and his first wish was to serve God as a minister of the National Church. After having finished his college course he for some time wavered in his early determination, and had some thought of devoting his life to the service of his king and country as a soldier. Fortunately, however, this intention was not carried into effect, as his after life showed that his talents did not lie in that direction. In due course (1758) he was licensed to preach the Gospel by the Presbytery of Jedburgh. The year following he was presented to the parish of Kinfauns in Perthshire by Lord President Craigie of the Court of Session and Laird of

Glendoick, and was there ordained. For three years he had the care of this parish, when he was translated to the parish of Perth, which was then a collegiate charge. The Rev. David Black was the senior minister of Perth, and the colleagues worked together with the greatest cordiality, which says much for the good sense and sterling qualities of both of these ministers. This arrangement lasted until the death of the senior minister in 1771, when the Rev. James Scott was chosen to fill his place.

Long before this time the nave of St. John's Church had been separated from the main building by dividing walls, and was then known by the name of the "New Kirk" and sometimes as the "Little Kirk," just as it is now known as the "West Parish Kirk." The little church had not been used for preaching since the Rev. William Wilson had been deposed. The secession of this much-beloved minister was such a severe blow to the Establishment that the Magistrates did not think it needful to appoint a third minister to fill his place.<sup>1</sup>

In later years, when The Rev. James Scott's voice had somewhat failed him, and he was not able to preach in the large church, he used to preach regularly in the West Church.

The choir, or eastern part of St. John's, was separated in 1772. It was the custom then for the ministers to preach alternately in each of the churches.

The Rev. James Scott was a man of culture and broad views ; his catholicity was extraordinary for the times, and he

<sup>1</sup> The Episcopalians wished to have the use of the unused church, but this could not be arranged.

worked heartily with the dissenting ministers of the town for the furtherance of whatever was for the good of the people and the spread of Christianity. He originated the "Perth Missionary Society," and at the young association's inception meeting there were present : from the Episcopalian Church, the Rev. Adam Peebles ; from the Burgher Church, the Rev. John Jervie and the Rev. Jedidiah Aikman ; from the Anti-Burgher Church, the Rev. Dr. Alexander Pringle and the Rev. Richard Black ; while the Relief Communion was represented by the Rev. David Sangster.

As showing the liberality of his views, compared with those of his co-Presbyters, Mr. Sievwright tells us, in his *History of the Congregational Church in Perth*, that when the Church in Paul Street was built by some secessionists from the Secession Church, the Rev. James Scott preached in it without leave from the Presbytery, and was censured by that body, on which occasion he declared he would preach in every house in his parish.

He was a poet and a musician ; he wrote hymns and sung his own compositions, accompanying himself on the harp. Although fond of poetry and the drama, yet, like most of the Scottish clergy of his day, he disapproved of public dramatic representations. He was a historian and antiquary. The *History of Perth and its Antiquities* was a special subject of study to him. He translated, transcribed, and made annotations of all the old manuscripts, registers, and charters on which he could lay his hands. His labours in this direction extended to several folio volumes, which were after his death purchased

for the Advocates' Library, as we have already noticed. In 1780 the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland was established, and four years afterwards James Scott projected a similar institution for Perth; and thus was formed the Literary and Antiquarian Society which has, especially in the earlier years of its existence, done so much for the furtherance of the study of our local history. He contributed the first paper to the young society, being "an Account of St. Dominic and the Friars of his Order," and until his death he was a frequent contributor of papers as varied as they were numerous. At a meeting of the society, held on the 15th of June 1790, Scott read "an Account of the Life of 'Blind Harry,'" after which, in recognition of his great services, he was asked to sit for his portrait, which was painted by Mr. Thomson, and soon afterwards hung in the hall.<sup>1</sup>

In 1794 he wrote the old "Statistical Account of Perth" for Sir John Sinclair's *Statistical Account of Scotland*. The *Statistical Account of Perth* was published, along with that of Kinnoul, in a small volume in 1796. In the advertisement to this work he writes of a design having been formed for the preparing and publishing a more full history of Perth, which unfortunately was not carried out. This short account, although it is but a plain statement of historical facts, is vastly interesting, and has been of great service to subsequent writers. Perhaps the best bit of writing in this account is his

<sup>1</sup> By the courtesy of the secretary of the Literary and Antiquarian Society we are enabled to reproduce this picture from a photograph by Mr. W. B. Mercer of Perth.

paraphrase of Henry Adamson's poetic flight on the Romans viewing Perth, and settling there; but even he does not commit himself on this point.

In 1810, in the seventy-seventh year of his age, he published his *History of the Lives of the Protestant Reformers in Scotland*.

The mysterious Gowrie Conspiracy attracted him in a high degree, and he wrote many papers on this subject. His *Life of John, Earl of Gowrie*, although finished in 1813, was not published until after his death. This posthumous publication is a handsome volume, well printed and well written. The conclusions of modern historians are more in sympathy with the views which Scott has enunciated in this work, and most Perth people will naturally incline to agree with him and free the Gowries from any attempt on the life of the king.

James Scott was of a generous and social disposition; he was a sincere Christian, a cultured scholar, and a true gentleman. His voice was low and soft, and, if we may estimate his character from his picture, he was a lovable man.

In 1795, while preaching, he was seized with fainting and giddiness, and at last he had to give up his public ministrations; yet, although unable to preach, he zealously attended to the other duties of a minister. He conducted in his own house classes for young men, with whom he was a great favourite.

Early in the nineteenth century the town had considerably increased in population, and it was felt that the church accommodation was insufficient. Provost Alexander Simson

was active in this matter, with the result that St. Paul's Church was built, and it appropriately received the same name as the pre-Reformation Religious Hospital which stood a short distance to the west. In 1807 the parish of Perth was divided into four parishes, namely, the Middle, East, West, and St. Paul. At this time the Rev. James Scott resigned his charge, and one minister was appointed to each parish. The aged minister of Perth died in 1818, in the eighty-fifth year of his age, and was buried in the Greyfriars' burial-ground, as was his wife who had predeceased him. He was survived by one son and two daughters, one of whom, Miss Susanna Scott, died at Cherrybank in 1854, at the ripe old age of eighty-seven years.

The following extract from Scott's *History of John, Earl of Gowrie*, gives some idea of the clear and firm style of the writer :

"According to Calderwood, it was the end of February 1600 that John, Earl of Gowrie arrived at Edinburgh after his long absence in foreign parts. He was then about twenty-two years of age, and the young man was happy in again seeing his native country. His arrival occasioned a general joy. As his ancestors had been, he himself, from the character given of him by pious and eminent men abroad, was also high in the esteem of the people. They considered that his opulent estates would render him independent of the favours of a corrupt court, and that he would have it much in his power to defend what they reckoned the pure religion and their civil liberties. But

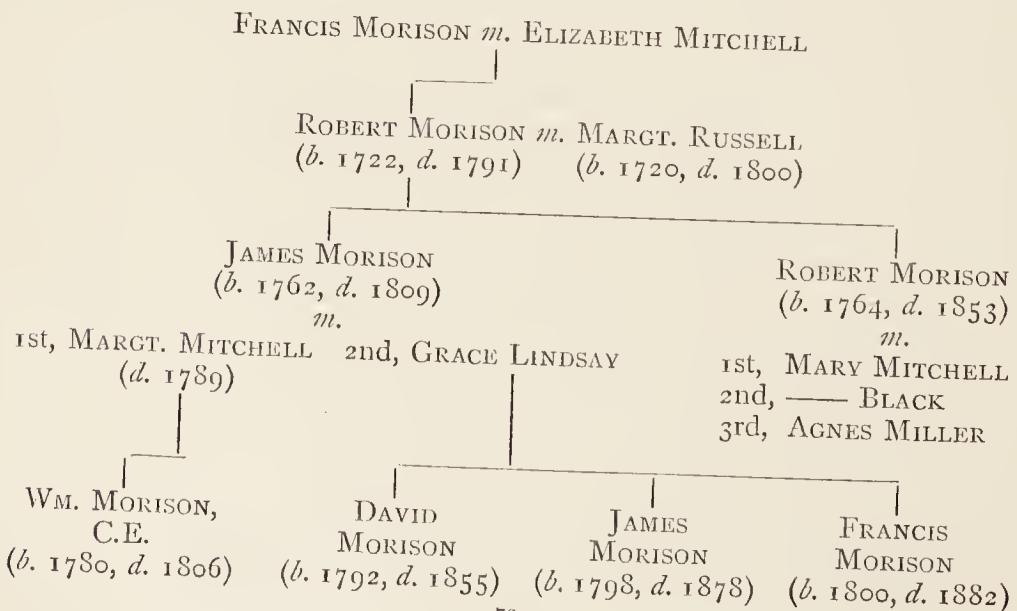
there was no joy in the heart of the King. Calderwood relates that the King showed that his temper was soured. When told that the Earl of Gowrie was passing up the street of Edinburgh with a number of his friends, and followed with the acclamations of a vast multitude of people, he peevishly replied, ‘There were as many people who conveyed his father to the scaffold at Stirling.’

“The Earl, after his arrival, paid his dutiful respects to the King, and there is reason to think that it was his sincere desire to live in friendship with his Majesty, and to obey his commands in all things that were lawful. His religious education had taught him that this was his duty. But the King’s mind was intent on accomplishing unpopular designs, in which he was certain the Earl never would concur. He did not improve in him any growing affection; but such was his hatred of him, as the determined opposer of his favourite schemes, that, though he valued himself for his talent for dissimulation, he could not always refrain from uttering discouraging and sarcastical reflections.”

## THE MORISONS OF PERTH, PRINTERS AND PUBLISHERS

FEW towns have been so fortunate as to number amongst their citizens such a family as that of the Morisons of Perth, which has in its successive generations brightened, enlivened, and stimulated the religious, the social, the literary, and the commercial life of the Fair City.

### GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE MORISON FAMILY



FRANCIS MORISON  
GLAZIER AND BOOKBINDER

Francis Morison, the first member of this family of whom we have any record, was a freeman glazier and bookbinder in Perth. His wife's name was Elizabeth Mitchell. He was evidently a citizen of some consequence and repute. He built and owned a three-storey house on the south side of High Street, then a most advantageous situation. This house has long been demolished, but its site is occupied by the hall of the Scoon and Perth Masonic Lodge. We have here the picture of a careful and comfortable burgess living quietly in the reign of the first George, and giving his attention to his business. He was respected by his fellow-citizens, and intimately connected with many of the civic families whose names were then well known in the public life of the town. In after years the old Perth names of Miller, Cree, Faichney, Peat, and Sandeman may be found frequently occurring in the pedigree of the Morison family.

The trade carried on by this old-time citizen was one which appealed to the higher—to the intellectual wants of mankind, and although the conjunction of the trades of bookbinder and glazier seems strange to this generation, it was quite familiar and appropriate to our forefathers. In those days window glass had only recently come into general use. Previous to that time it was far too expensive a material, and it was chiefly used for church windows, and

then sparingly. In the windows of palaces in old days only the upper parts were glazed, the lower being fitted with wooden shutters, which were opened or closed according to the state of the weather. In mansion houses the library would be the first and sometimes the only room having its windows filled with glass ; hence the intimate connection of the trades of glazier and bookbinder.

Possibly the trade carried on by Francis Morison was not a large one, but then the wants of his generation were few ; however that may be, his merit must have been great and his influence extensive, for we find his name recorded as having filled the office of Deacon of the Incorporation of Wrights, which body enfolded under its ample protecting wing all workmen who wrought with edged tools. The "sciences" of bookbinding and glazing were thus licensed by the Wright Incorporation.

The worthy deacon and his wife were blessed with a son, who in future years profited by the example his father had left him, and who is the subject of the next sketch.

### ROBERT MORISON

1722-1791

POSTMASTER, PRINTER, BOOKSELLER

Robert Morison was born at Perth in 1722, where, after possibly receiving all the education obtainable at the Grammar School, he followed the same trade as his now deceased father.

He was a man of activity and intelligence, rather than of culture and education. A man without intellectual capacity will soon lose and forget anything he may be taught, but a man of an active mind will educate himself. When twenty years of age, young Morison was "received and admitted" a member of the Incorporation of Wrights, for without becoming a freeman he could not be permitted to exercise his trade. The minute of his admission is of an interesting character, and throws a light on the customs and habits of a past age; it is in the following terms:

"PERTH, 31st December 1742.

"Compeared Robert Morison Glazier and Bookbinder in Perth, son to the Deceast Francis Morison late Deacon of the Wright Calling of Perth, who was a freeman Glazier and Bookbinder and craved to be admitted to the said two sciences, which being considered by the Calling they have received and admitted, and hereby receive and admitt the said Robert Morison to be a freeman Glazier and Bookbinder or Stationer, and to the hail liberties and privileges thereto belonging for payment of Ten Merks as his freedom Money as Glazier and Four Pounds Scots as his freedom Money as Bookbinder or Stationer with Eight Pounds Scots for a Dinner and Four Pounds of Officer's Fee. And he also paid Four Pounds Scots as his Foot Ball, he being married, all which was instantly paid in to the present Boxmaster, whereupon the said Robert Morison asked and took Instruments in the Clerk's hands.

(Signed)      "THOMAS YOUNG."

Only three years after this time occurred that great crisis in our national history, the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. Robert Morison, still a young man, was then the Postmaster at Perth, he was full of zeal for the Government, and anxious to discharge the duties of his office to the best of his ability. About this time he issued a Table of Regulations of the Post Office, which must have been of great assistance to the citizens, and, at the same time, like a prudent man of business, he is careful to add a supplement or advertisement detailing the various articles sold by him. The advertisement is perhaps the most curious part of this broad sheet.

This interesting document, as published by the late David Marshall, F.S.A. (Scot.), is as follows :

#### “REGULATIONS OF THE POST-OFFICE, PERTH

“The *South Post* arrives every morning (except Monday) at or before Nine o’Clock ; and immediately upon its arrival the North Post is Dispatched ; therefore all Letters for the North must be given into the Office by Eight o’Clock at farthest, otherwise they will not go by that Day’s Post ; for the North Bags will be Shut at half an Hour past Eight, whether the South Post be arrived or not. As the Letters are to be Stamped, Charged, and Marked in the Vouchers, after which no Alteration can be made, it is expected People will not Disappoint themselves, by being later than the above fixed time for giving them in.

“The *North Post* arrives every Night (except Saturday), at or before Eight at Night ; therefore all Letters for the

South must be put into the Office half an Hour before Eight, otherwise they will not go by that Post.

"As there are no Mails Received or Dispatched at the Post-office in London on Sabbath; therefore there are no Letters from England by our Friday's Mail: and whatever Letters for England are given in here on Tuesday, are no sooner in London than those on Wednesday; which arrive in London on Monday.

"This Office will be open to give out Letters on Sabbath, betwixt Nine and Ten Forenoon; and betwixt Twelve and a quarter past One Mid-day:—therefore it is expected every Person in Town and Country will order their Servants to call for their Letters at some of the above Hours, or not expect them that day.—Every other day Letters will be given out at any Hour from Eight in the Morning to Eight at Night, except from Half an Hour past One to Half an Hour after Two, when the Office will be Shut.

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"\* \* \* Sold by Robert Morrison, Post-master in Perth, School Books; Bibles, gilt and plain; Psalm-books, ditto; and every Book (on a short Notice) at the same Price as at the place of Publication.—Writing-paper, gilt and plain; Mourning-paper; Message Cards; Sealing Wax; Red, Black, and White Wafers; Red, Black, Japan, and China Ink; Black-lead Pencils; Hair Pencils; Quills; Pen Knives; Ivory Holders; Brass and Leather Ink-pieces; Fountain, and Thumb Ink glasses; Slates and Slate Pencils; Pounce; Shining Sand; Juniper's Essence of Pepper-mint; Baume de vie; Turbington's Drops; Lozenges for Coughs and Colds; Anderson's Pills; Daff's Elixir; Stoughton's Drops; British Oil; Radcliff's Purging Elixir; Dr. Bateman's Drops; Balsam

of Honey; Nipple Ointment; Shining Blacking Cakes for Shoes, which preserve the leather soft to the last, and does not soil the Stockings or Fingers; Essence of Lemons, which entirely takes out Stains of any kind on Linen Cambricks, or Lawns, &c.

"Also Window-glass, Books Bound in the neatest manner; just from London, a large Collection of little Books for Children, Catalogues whereof may be had gratis."

It is a pity we cannot now have a sight of his catalogue of little books for children.

The Postmastership must always have been a position of importance, but in those days the duties were not of such magnitude as to take up the whole time and attention of the holder of the office, and as a consequence the salary would be proportionately small. Robert Morison, however, was just the sort of man who would magnify his office, and in his hands it would be an honourable position. Besides his office of Postmaster he was, as we have seen, a glazier and bookbinder, as well as a bookseller, stationer, and dealer in a variety of articles which may not now be purchased from a bookseller. In later years he had a branch business at Dunkeld, which, we have been informed, was taken over by James Cant.

After the suppression of the Rebellion the Postmaster was an important witness against the followers of Prince Charles Edward Stuart. Feeling was at this time very much divided in Perth. Many of the citizens, even of those who had taken the oaths of Government, being rebels and supporters

of the Jacobites ; but, on the other hand, the majority of the townsmen and the municipal authorities were strongly in favour of the House of Hanover.

The year before the Rebellion, Sir John Cope, the Commander of His Majesty's Forces in Scotland, received the freedom of the city, and two years later the Duke of Cumberland was made an Honorary Burgess.

The Royal Duke, although he was called the "Butcher" by the Jacobites, was hailed by the Whigs as the deliverer of his country, and to him the Magistrates in their generosity presented the Gowrie House, which he promptly sold to the Government, who in turn converted it into an artillery barracks.

Perth then became more than ever one of the chief military centres, a place of importance and modest prosperity. The population was increased by the Hessians and other troops, and many of the soldiers ultimately settled there. Education was improved, trade received an impetus, and new manufactures were introduced. As a result of this improved prosperity a printing press<sup>1</sup> was started in Perth in the year 1770 by George Johnston, and from his office was published *The Perth Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*. This early venture was printed for our friend Robert Morison, the Postmaster, then the leading bookseller in Perth, and "sold by him and all other booksellers in Scotland." It was a sort of precursor of the *Review of Reviews*, for although the editor solicited original contributions, yet he republished whatever

<sup>1</sup> This was not the first printing press in Perth. See *ante*, p. 25.

was “useful and entertaining in all the other magazines, reviews, newspapers, etc., published in Great Britain.”

In the third volume of this old *Perth Magazine*, on page 101 (1772), may be found a letter from James Cant, a well-known local antiquary, who writes over the pen name of “Priscus,” announcing his intention “of undertaking a new edition of an old descriptive poem of Perth and its environs, with notes and observations.” *The Muses’ Threnodie* of Henry Adamson, published more than a hundred years before, is the work to which Priscus refers, the book being then out of print and a copy very difficult to obtain.

Following this communication, in a subsequent number there appeared a letter from another correspondent, writing over the *nom de plume* of “Perthensis,” and suggesting that the publication should take the form of a supplement of eight pages, separately numbered, and attached to each alternate issue of the *Magazine*. “Perthensis” at the same time offered to place at the disposal of the editor, material which he had collected with a similar object as that of Priscus, and which might be used along with his notes. It is refreshing to notice the activity of the literary life in Perth at this time, and the enthusiasm of these correspondents.

The generous proposal was accepted, and on the 15th of October 1773 the first instalment of Adamson’s *Poems* appeared, with the notes of “Perthensis.” These notes were, however, not continued further, as “Perthensis” declined to supply more on finding that Cant still proposed to carry out his original intention. The text of the rest of

the “Inventory” and other introductory poems, as well as that of the main poem, *The Threnodie*, as far as near the end of the fifth muse, continued to appear without notes every fortnight, until the *Magazine* came to an untimely end on the 24th of December 1773, having existed just about a year and a half.

The question, Who was “Perthensis”? now naturally arises. We are strongly of opinion that he was no other than the proprietor of the *Perth Magazine*, Robert Morison, bookseller and Postmaster of that day. Our first reason for this opinion is the easy and business-like way in which he introduces himself in the correspondence. Our second reason is that we have the pleasure of possessing a copy of *The Muses' Threnodie* as published in, or rather at the end of, the *Perth Magazine* up to the fifty-second page, when the publication was stopped, and the remainder of the poem in the handwriting of “Perthensis,” with his notes. Supporting this reason is the fact that we acquired this unique copy of Adamson’s poems from the gentleman who succeeded to the printing business of the Morisons when they retired, and it then formed part of the stock. If another reason be necessary, we have compared the caligraphy of the manuscript part of the book with a genuine signed letter of Robert Morison’s dated eleven years earlier; and allowing for the difference in point of time, and the fact that the letter bears traces of being a hastily written and carelessly composed document, we have no doubt that “Perthensis” and Robert Morison, the Postmaster of Perth, are one and the same person.

The letter referred to above belongs to Mr. Robert Morison, Accountant, Perth, to whom we are indebted for much valuable information relative to his ancestors. It is indorsed to "W. S. Ed." *i.e.* William Sandeman, then in Edinburgh on business. The letter, which is of an interesting nature, is dated 20th January 1762, and as it has never been published we have transcribed it:

"About five or six weeks ago, our Provost received a letter from the Precess of the Committee of Royal Boroughs advising him that they had agreed to send a person to London to be at the head of their application for accelerating the post betwixt Edinburgh and London, and to get the post six days in the week from London to Edinburgh, and also to apply for an augmentation of the postmasters' salaries, to all which our Provost agreed, upon condition that the post from London should come as often to Perth as to Edinburgh, and I suppose all the rest of the principal Boroughs would give the same answer. My design of writing you this is that if your time will allow, you may make what inquiry you can if any person is as yet sent, if they are to send any or when. Wishing you a good ride to Glasgow, and safe arrival at Perth, I am, yours affectionately,

(Signed)      "ROBERT MORISON."

Referring to the *nom de plume* "Perthensis," William Morison, the grandson of Robert, and the acting editor of the *Encyclopædia Perthensis*, was probably aware that that name had been used by his grandfather when he so named the great work of the Morison Press.

Shortly after the demise of the *Perth Magazine*, Johnston the printer removed to Edinburgh, when Robert Morison succeeded to his business; and thus was established the celebrated printing and publishing concern so long carried on by him and his more famous descendants. Robert Morison's wife was named Margaret Russell. She was a daughter of the manse, her father having been minister at Forgan in Fife. Her mother was Elizabeth Tullideph, the daughter of a St. Andrews Professor. They had one daughter, who was born in 1759, and named Jacobina, a curious name for such an ardent supporter of the Government to give his first-born.<sup>1</sup>

There were also two sons born of this marriage, James in 1762, and Robert in 1764. Robert Morison, the Postmaster, died in the year 1791. George Penny, in his *Traditions of Perth*, tells us (page 33) that in conformity with the custom of the times, the place of business of the deceased was shut until after the funeral. On the death of the Postmaster the Post Office was accordingly closed, and "an honest Highlander, who had come a distance of several miles for his master's letters, finding how matters stood, anxiously inquired if there were no other shops in town where they *sold* letters."

<sup>1</sup> She was married to W. Walker, Dundee, and her daughter, also named Jacobina, became the wife of Hector Turnbull, bleacher, Claverhouse, near Dundee.

## JAMES MORISON

1762-1809

LINGUIST, WRITER, PUBLISHER

As has been mentioned, James Morison was born at Perth in 1762. He commenced business as a bookseller (according to the *Dictionary of National Biography*) at Leith. He could not, however, have been long established there, for he was early admitted a partner in his father's business at Perth.

James Morison and his brother Robert, like many of their race, were exceedingly precocious. The two young men married very early in life, and their wives were little more than girls. They then resided in Rose Terrace in flats, which were entered by one common stair. A story is told of the young folks, which we give without vouching for its truth : An old lady friend, on making a call of ceremony on the two young married couples, found them all four engaged running up the stairs and sliding down the banisters. Notwithstanding this story, James Morison was a young man of gravity and ability, and under his management the business developed from being a small concern to one of the most important publishing houses in the country. James Morison was a cultured student as well as an active man of business ; he was the author of many works, and to his other attainments he added that of being an accomplished linguist. Amongst the most important of his writings are Morison's *Key to the Scriptures* (first four Books of Moses), with Appendices containing

extracts from the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, published in two volumes in 1806 by Abernethy & Walker, Edinburgh; and the *Theological Dictionary*, published in 1807.

James Morison was twice married: first by our old friend James Cant, one of the elders of the Glassite Church, in 1778, to Margaret Mitchell, daughter of Thomas Mitchell, writer in Perth, and Margaret Sandeman, daughter of William Sandeman. He was only sixteen years of age at the time of his marriage. His wife must have also been very young, for she was the granddaughter of his father's correspondent. She bore him five children, the eldest of whom, William,<sup>1</sup> we will refer to subsequently. Margaret Mitchell died in 1789, when James Morison took to himself a second wife in the person of Grace Lindsay, daughter of David Lindsay, merchant and banker in Perth, and Catherine Anderson his spouse. This marriage was celebrated by Patrick Miller, the Town Clerk of Perth, one of the elders of the Glassite Church. Grace Lindsay was of a lively temperament, and we cannot help thinking that much of the vivacity and saving grace of humour of this branch of the Morison family is derived from this ancestress. The fruit of this marriage was five children, of some of whom more anon.

Several of the works published by the Morison Press at this time are translations from the French by James Morison, the moving spirit of the firm of R. Morison & Son. To this period also belongs the famous editions of the Scottish Poets, *James I., Gavin Douglas, Dunbar, and Fergusson*. Also an

<sup>1</sup> William Morison was born before his father had attained his seventeenth year.

edition of “*Blind Harry’s*” *Wallace*, in three volumes, which claims to be the only authentic copy from the manuscript in the Advocates’ Library, which manuscript was written in Perth by a monk of the Charterhouse. To give anything like a complete list of the many works published by this famous firm is not in our power. Amongst the more notable, however, may be named Thomson’s *Seasons*, of which three different editions were issued from the Perth Press; Buffon’s *Natural History*; Oliver Goldsmith’s *Works*; Pope’s *Essay on Man*; Dryden’s *Virgil*; and many others of local and general interest. If we cannot mention all the books issued by this famous provincial press, we have at least shown the great variety and value of the works then printed and published at Perth.

James Morison, besides his work as a publisher and his labours as an author, was also a partner along with his brother-in-law, Henry Lindsay, in the paper works of Woodend, near Huntingtower.

He was an elder of the Glassite Church in Perth, and his works are chiefly of a religious character. There is no work on the history of Perth which bears his name, but we are strongly of opinion that the account of the demolition of the Perth monasteries, which first appeared in *The Scenes in Scotland*, is printed from a manuscript left by him. He died in the year 1809, in his forty-seventh year. His theological works were published in 1806–7, shortly before he died, and not after, as has been elsewhere stated.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John Minto, M.A., in *The Perth Library and Museum Record* for January 1900.

## ROBERT MORISON

1764-1853

PRINTER

Robert Morison, the younger brother of James, was early established as the “printer” of the firm, and most of the works which we have mentioned bear the imprint “Printed by R. Morison, Junior, for R. Morison & Son.” Robert Morison, the printer, was three times married, and he lived to a good old age. He was the printer of the *Perth Courier* from its inception in 1809 to nearly the year of his death in 1853.

In 1796 the Morisons were appointed printers to the University of St. Andrews, when they issued what has been called the immaculate editions of *Horace* and *Sallust*, edited by Professor John Hunter.

Much of the success of this early publishing firm is without doubt due to Robert Morison. Readers are apt to forget the important work which is done by the printer in the making of a book. Those who have had experience of a good compositor know how much they are indebted to his taste, and even genius, in setting up their thoughts.

Robert Morison, “the printer,” did not write ; he evidently took life easier than his brother. And he had his reward—he lived to a good old age, and died in 1853, in his eighty-ninth year.

## WILLIAM MORISON

1780-1806

ENCYCLOPEDIST, WRITER, PUBLISHER

William Morison was the son of James Morison by his first wife. He joined the publishing firm when he was but sixteen years of age. His span of life was to be a short one—he lived only ten years after entering into business; but, as if conscious of the brevity of his life, he did an extraordinary amount of work in the time allotted to him. “He liveth long who liveth well; the space of this short life the slothful count by time, the good by merit. Believe that each day has dawned on you for the last time”<sup>1</sup>

William Morison is described in the Sandeman Genealogical Tree as a civil engineer, but we cannot discover that he ever practised this profession. His grandfather, the founder of the printing business, died while he was but a lad, and he was early called to take his place as a member of the firm.

So far as local literature is concerned, his name is associated with only one work; but this much we can learn from it, that the author, or rather the editor, for it is in great part a compilation, was an enthusiastic son of Perth. The book to which we refer is the *Memorabilia of Perth*, which

<sup>1</sup> Free translation of a latin inscription on a stone built into the north wall of the choir of St. John's Church, Perth.

was published in 1806 by William Morison ; but owing to the constant occupation of their press in Perth it was printed at Edinburgh by J. Pillans & Sons. The publisher in his advertisement does not directly say that he is the editor of this book, but there can be no doubt that he was. He apologises for its incompleteness and general unworthiness, but offers it as a stopgap until a more suitable volume should be issued. He and many others had evidently expected that the Literary and Antiquarian Society of Perth would have issued such a history, worthy at once of the subject and their high aspirations, but regret the disappointment of their hopes. The book is embellished by a plan of the city, given as a frontispiece, showing the intended additions and improvements, and inscribed to Thomas Hay Marshall, the Lord Provost, to whose enterprise is due the happy changes which were then effected in the appearance and comfort of the town. A small drawing of the seminaries then in course of erection is shown in the right-hand corner of the plan. The other engravings are Gowrie House, The Bridge of Perth from the back of Charlotte Street, St. John's Church from the north-west, showing Halkerston's Tower, all of which are drawn by R. Littlejohn and engraved by R. Scott. The book is divided into six sections, comprising—I. A Guide through the City and Neighbourhood ; II. Historical Memoranda, with a List of Magistrates brought up to Date ; III. The Rev. Alexander Duff's traditional Account of the Death of John, Earl of Gowrie, originally contributed to the Literary and Antiquarian Society of Perth ; IV. Charters relating to the

Privileges of Perth; V. List of Ministers of Perth from the Reformation, Account of the Rectors of the Grammar School, and an Account of the Academy; VI. List of the Subscribers for building the Bridge in 1776, and Public Seminaries in 1804-5.

The guide to Perth, the subject of the first section, is a spirited composition. From the ridge of the Ochil Hills he brings the visitor through the valley of the Earn to within sight of Perth on the shoulder of Moncrieff Hill. Here, after admiring the view, he condescends to give us some information which is not to be found in history. He says : "From this spot the invading legions of Rome caught an enraptured view of a vale, beautiful as the fairest Eden of their native Italy. They descended and pitched their tents ; for now they exclaimed, 'We have found another field of Mars on the banks of another Tiber.'" These sentences are elegantly expressed, but they are only a paraphrase of Henry Adamson, or an emanation of the writer's imagination. In this he does not follow Cant, the editor of the second edition of Adamson's *Poems*, who very cautiously and correctly characterises the poet's flight on the subject of the Romans viewing Perth and settling there, as a poetical fable.<sup>1</sup>

In describing St. John's Church, he styles it "the Kirk of the Holy Cross of St. Johnston." This name is also given to our old church in Morison's *Guide to Perthshire*, and it is repeated in the *Picture of Scotland*, all the three works being published within a few years of each other. The proper and

<sup>1</sup> Cant's edition of *The Muses' Threnodie*, p. 89.

full name of this old parish church is the Church of St. John the Baptist of Perth, and it never had any other.

In the second section of the *Memorabilia* the writer again refers to the supposed Roman origin of Perth, where he works out an elaborate argument in favour of his pet theory. In the first place he was misled by the writer of the *Old Statistical Account of Perth*, and neither he nor the Rev. James Scott was aware that *de Situ Britanniae*, ascribed to Richard of Cirencester, which gives some colour to Adamson's poetic conception, was a vamped piece of literary work, and a forgery. The remainder of the section is mostly a reprint from Cant, as are the other sections, with the exception of the last, which contains new and interesting matter. Although the *Memorabilia of Perth* is now very scarce, yet it is still much prized, possibly largely owing to the difficulty of obtaining a copy. It cannot be said, however, that this book is a sufficient memorial of William Morison, who was more engaged at this time with the great work to which we will now refer.

The history of the inception and production of the *Encyclopædia Perthsis*<sup>1</sup> is known only in bare outline, but there can be no doubt but that it was the dream of William Morison's youth. The thought that he would produce this *magnum opus* of the Morison Press had come to him like an inspiration, and he at once proceeds to work it out. His

<sup>1</sup> James Waterson, Junior, of Edinburgh, in a paper read before the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society in 1891, says that he thinks Mr. D. Buchanan, of Montrose, assisted in the compilation of this work.

first care was to get an editor. Alexander Aitchison's name stands on the title page. There was plenty of work for him to do, but it is questionable if much was done by him. William Morison was the assistant, nay, he was the acting editor and the moving spirit.

The preface of the first edition bears no date. It gives the greatest merit in the production of the work to Alexander Aitchison, member of the Royal, Physical, and other Societies of Edinburgh. The nature of the work may best be described by a transcription of its title, which is as follows :

“*Encyclopædia Perthensis*, or *Universal Dictionary of Knowledge*, collected from every source, and intended to supersede the use of all other English books of reference. Illustrated with plans and maps, in 23 volumes. Perth : Printed for C. Mitchell and Co., and sold for them by Mr. Thomas Ostell, Ave Maria Lane, London. Sold also by Messrs. Vernon, Hood, & Sharpe, London, and all respectable Booksellers. R. Morison, Printer.”

This great work, perhaps the most wonderful which has ever been produced and published in a provincial town, was dedicated to Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo, Baronet, one of the most eminent Scotsmen of his time, an author himself, and extensively engaged in the business of banking. It is in truth an extraordinary production for the time. Never had there been such a work published in Perth, and we are free to say there never shall be another like it. Even

in our day, George Augustus Sala, in an article on books of reference, speaks of the *Encyclopædia Perthensis* with great respect, and says that he regularly used it for reference.<sup>1</sup>

A second edition was called for in 1816, but it was printed at Edinburgh. It was at once a dictionary of art and science, a complete gazetteer, and a dictionary of the English language. It extended to twenty-three quarto volumes, and was published in half-guinea parts during the years 1796 and on to 1806. Throughout all this time William Morison was hard at work, but the labour was more than his strength could cope with. He lived, however, to correct the last sheet, and although the strain was now removed, his bow had been bent too long to recover its strength. For him "the silver cord was loosed."

He died on the 22nd day of July 1806, being aged only twenty-six, while still a young man the summer sun had shone on him for the last time. On his monument in the Greyfriars' burial-ground, which was erected by his intimate companions, are these words of Horace, "Non omnis morior," indicating his hope of a blessed resurrection; but even to future generations he might have said, "I shall not all die." The *Encyclopædia Perthensis* is his monument, and hundreds of students will remember his labours with gratitude, and sorrow that may-hap he gave his life for the advancement of learning.

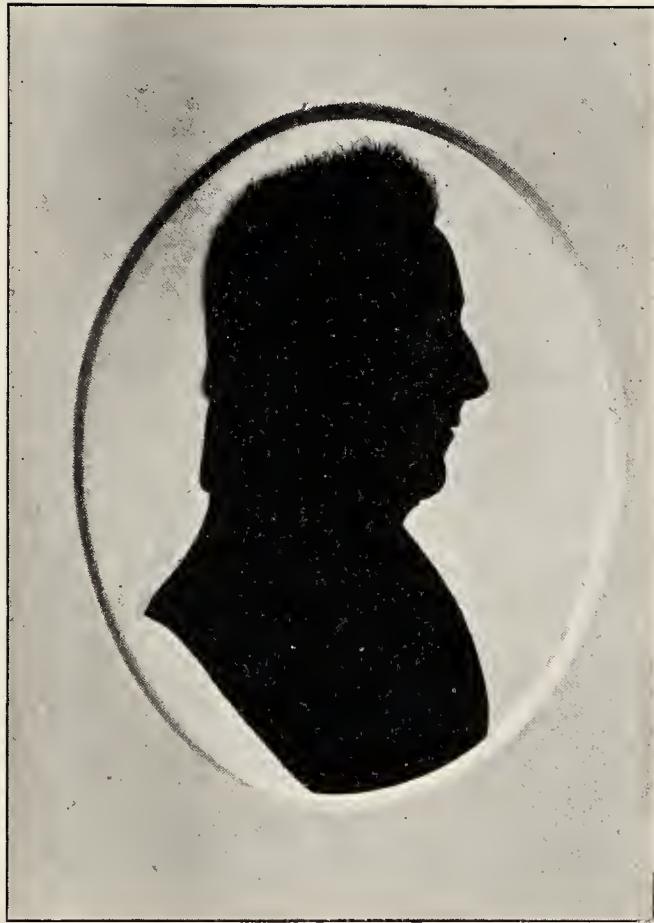
<sup>1</sup> Paper by George Waterson, Junior, Edinburgh, read to the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society.

## DAVID MORISON

1792-1855

LINGUIST, WRITER, PUBLISHER

David Morison, the eldest son of the second family, was born in the year 1792. He was at once a student of great ability and an active man of business. His early studies were made with the view of his adopting the profession of a lawyer, but his father having died when he was but seventeen years of age, his first intentions were set aside and he joined the publishing firm, where he found scope for his energy and undoubted genius. His education was on the most liberal scale in every sense of the word. As a linguist his knowledge of ancient and modern classics, as well as Oriental languages, was most extensive. His literary ability was great. His *Religious History of Man* was a great success, no less than three editions of it having been published (1838-1842, 1852). He was also the writer of the text of Colonel Murray of Ochtertyre's *Scenes in Scotland*, published by his firm in 1834, of which more anon. Under his direction the business of publishers continued to prosper. He was not content to leave to others the practical direction, but made himself acquainted with every mechanical and business detail. His artistic taste led him early to perfect himself in the work of lithography, which became a useful adjunct in the business.



DAVID MORISON,  
1792-1855,  
PERTH PUBLISHER.



For Lord Gray of Kinfauns he printed the catalogue of his library and the catalogue of his paintings, the decorative work of which was drawn on the stone and lithographed by David Morison, although the beautiful hand-colouring was done by his sisters. Sir Walter Scott, who had received a presentation copy of the library catalogue, was so pleased with it that he wrote :

“Mr. Morison has done himself great honour in the scholar-like and artistic manner in which he has accomplished the interesting task which your lordship entrusted to his charge. The poetry and literary notes with which the interesting volume is accompanied do honour to him as a man of taste and genius, and the execution of the tasteful illuminations are in the first character of ancient art, and remind us of the work of Holbein chastened by a more elegant and refined period of the arts. The volume of the Gray Catalogue will be in my little collection a most interesting memorial of the state of the arts and literature of Scotland at this period. I have seen no work of the kind more beautifully or more classically designed and executed.”

We have had the pleasure of seeing this beautiful catalogue, and although we are not qualified to speak of it as has been done by the great master, we feel sure that such a work could only have been accomplished by one who had entered on it in a spirit of love, governed by genius and taste.

The Literary and Antiquarian Society of Perth, which was founded by the Rev. James Scott, one of the ministers of Perth, in 1874, is an institution which had, especially in its

earlier days, stimulated and invigorated the literary and historical life of the town. At this time it was a flourishing society, and included in its membership the cream of the men of thought both in the county and city. Amongst its members were Lord Hailes the historian; that eccentric but enthusiastic antiquary the Earl of Buchan; Sir Walter Scott; John Galt the novelist; Dr., afterwards Sir David, Brewster; Adam Anderson, afterwards Professor; Rev. Dr. Esdaile, etc. etc. On the death of the untiring secretary, Dr. M'Omie, David Morison was in 1819 appointed to this congenial post. Mainly by his efforts, funds were raised for a memorial to Thomas Hay Marshall of Glenalmond, who had done so much to improve and beautify the town during his Provostship. This monument was designed by David Morison, and he superintended its erection. The object of the building was to furnish a home for the Literary and Antiquarian Society and the Perth Library. The Perth Library has now become the property of the Literary and Antiquarian Society, although every precaution had been made in the rules to prevent such a contingency. The monument is still occupied by this old society (as its museum), which has done so much to further the study of local and national history, although it has in these last days become somewhat moribund. The plan of the building is that of a circular Roman temple, having a domical roof and an entablature to the front supported by four fluted Ionic columns resting on a stylobate. It is divided into two storeys, although these are not shown from the outside. The lower

one contains the library, and the upper the museum. The entrance is bad, and the stair leading to the museum is wretched. The design has no pretension to originality. Adaptations from Roman and Grecian architecture were fashionable at the time of the erection of this monument. In criticising this building we must remember that Morison was not an architect. He has succeeded, however, in giving us a monument of a bold and striking appearance, which is greatly enhanced by its site.

Besides being Secretary to the Antiquarian Society, he was also appointed to fill the post of Librarian to the Perth Library, when it was domiciled in the new building ; and he has left us a better monument of his ability in the catalogue of the library than in the design of the building itself. Writing on the subject of this catalogue, one who is better able to judge of its merits than the present writer, says :

“The catalogue is an excellent example of the classified catalogue with author index, and shows Mr. Morison to have been a thoroughly capable librarian, and far ahead of most librarians of his day.”<sup>1</sup>

David Morison says in his preface to the catalogue of the Perth Library :

“The proverbial dulness of a mere list of names of books has prompted the librarian to follow the example of those bibliographers who, by bibliographical or critical notes, have rescued catalogues from the humble station they were so

<sup>1</sup> John Minto, M.A., first librarian of the Sandeman Library.

long allowed to occupy, and given them a place in the history of literature."

Following the example of the learned Thomas Ruddiman, best known to us by his *Latin Rudiments*, who more than a hundred years before this time, amongst his other employments in Edinburgh, sold books by auction, we find the many-sided David Morison acting as an auctioneer. In 1817 he prepared a catalogue for the sale of the library which belonged to the late William Stewart, Esquire, of Spoutwells, extending to 381 pages octavo, and numbering some 7413 items. The catalogue is a goodly volume, and is priced at 3s. 6d. This large library was sold in the Council Room of Perth, and David Morison acted as auctioneer. The Spoutwells library was the most extensive and interesting which had ever been dispersed in Scotland. It embraced many works of the Elzevir and Fowlis presses, besides many works in black letter.

Let us picture in imagination this great book sale: The stage-coaches have brought from the north and from the south their freights of eager buyers; passengers travelling in post-chaises have rested over night in the large inns, the "George," the "Salutation," and the "King's Arms"; buyers journeying on horseback have baited their steeds; parish ministers, dissenting ministers, schoolmasters, farmers, *et hoc genus omne*, have rested after their journey, removed the stains of travel, and are now fresh and ready to attend this great sale. All now wend their way this summer

morning to the old Town House, which then barred the way to the river at the foot of High Street. Here were met men of learning, the dilettante patrons of art, men of business in the book world, others consumed by curiosity, some of whom, comparatively ignorant, yet possessed by that mysterious awe of the printed page which is fast dying out. We confess ourselves to a great reverence for all printed matter. There is never a wind-tossed stray book-leaf blown across our path but we would fain stop to read its message; there is not an old book-stall that we would not like to spend as much time over as occasion might permit. But here are no torn leaves nor worthless books, but a collection of treasures such as never before had been brought together in the Council Room of Perth since its foundation had been laid by William Mylne,<sup>1</sup> the Dupplin wright who caused such a flutter in the dovecots of the privileged tradesmen of Perth. Strangers might well be surprised at the sight of so young a man<sup>2</sup> mounting the rostrum, but a greater surprise was in store for them. Is there any suspicion of stage-fright here? If so, it is soon dispelled by the intimate knowledge the salesman has of the wares he offers for sale. Here is an auctioneer, fit match for the keenest of his buyers, who can construe a page of Hebrew as readily as many modern scholars can read Tacitus or Buchanan; not only a linguist but a literary man, familiar with the whole process of book-making from the printing to the binding.

<sup>1</sup> William Mylne was not a freeman of Perth.

<sup>2</sup> David Morison was then twenty-five years of age.

With what joy the collector hears the hammer fall as some choice black-letter volume is knocked down to him; how sinks the heart of the poor schoolmaster as some choice copy of his favourite classic author rapidly runs up to a price beyond his narrow means; see yon parchment-faced scholar, how the smile of exultation wreathes his wrinkled brow as he stows his prize away in his capacious pocket. This is no one-day sale, but a mart of learning lasting for a month. When we think of it all we can only exclaim with the simple but learned dominie of fiction, and say, *Prodigious! prodigious!* Now the day's sale draws to a close; the buyers disperse, and each one collects his bargains; the caddies stand about the doors waiting for employment; the tired auctioneer comes down to the floor and mingles with the common throng; and the clerk counts his cash. See yon civic dignitary, who has come to patronise the sale, strut away well pleased with his modest purchase. Here is a country padre from the distant hills, after carefully paying his bill and pocketing his formal receipt, packs his precious cargo in a grocer's sack and proudly takes his homeward way with a load of knowledge on his back. Watch this neatly dressed old gentleman in a cut-away coat, with knee breeches, silk stockings, and shoes with silver buckles. Possibly he is a banker; he is having some confidential conversation with the sober-looking red-nosed clerk, who presently follows him to the King's Arms Inn, where they indulge in a pinch of snuff and some further talk about the day's transactions. He gives the clerk special orders to send his purchases to the bank on the morrow, from

whence he furtively takes them home volume by volume, in fear of the wrath of his better half. If he is an inveterate book collector, he is also a genial old gentleman. God bless him!

David Morison contributed many papers to the Literary and Antiquarian Society, and as secretary he edited volume number one, the only one ever issued, of the *Transactions of the Society*. This volume is now somewhat scarce. Amongst its contents are many papers of local interest which have been freely used by subsequent historians. The editor contributed to it a paper on the Gowrie Conspiracy, with plans of the Gowrie House, a part of which has been reproduced by David Peacock in his book.

The copy of Colonel Murray's *Scenes in Scotland* (Perth, 1834), the text of which was written by David Morison, which we have before us, is unfortunately incomplete.<sup>1</sup> This work affords a good example of his literary style, and, as befitting the subject, he is dignified and impressive. His description of the coast of Angus from the Redhead to Arbroath, with its wild headlands and mysterious caves, is done with much care and even an occasional glint of humour. Writing of the "Forbidden Cave," he says "it was in early ages supposed to be frequented by all the evil spirits of the country, and in more modern times known to be the receptacle of the *best spirits* from abroad." Although he never obtrudes his personality, yet he reveals himself as an ardent admirer of

<sup>1</sup> On the title-page of this book the letters F.R.S.A.(Scot.) are appended to his name. This is a misprint for F.S.A.(Scot.). He became a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1828.

the patriots Wallace and Bruce. In this book may also be found, in the "Friar of the Forth," an example of his power as a poet.

In this book appears a drawing of Perth as it is supposed to have appeared in pre-Reformation times. Whoever is responsible for this picture, Murray or Morison, there is no doubt that it had been drawn to illustrate the account of the demolition of the monasteries. It is a modern picture, and ought to have been labelled as such when it was published. Ah! David Morison, little you thought of the use, or rather abuse, which would be made of your fancy picture in another age, when the thumb-nail sketches which were meant to represent the monasteries, the church, and castle of Perth in your bird's-eye view, have been magnified to represent the originals. Regarding the account of the demolition of the monasteries, it is a modern attempt to depict an ancient event. Whoever wrote those fanciful, fictitious, legendary lines, wrote the most fateful of all the writings about Perth. They have been copied by many subsequent writers. We well remember, when a boy of twelve, first reading them in Peacock's *Annals and Archives*. Here was a message from the past; here was a piece of writing different from everything else in the book. It was just as delightful as, and more mysterious than, *Robinson Crusoe*.

The substance of this narrative was furnished by his grandmother, Margaret Russell, a descendant of Principal Tullideph of St. Andrews. The style of this piece of writing, however, is not that of David Morison, neither is the tone.

Margaret Russell died in the year 1800, when her grandson was but eight years of age, so that the story may have been communicated to his father, James Morison, and the whole account was probably printed from a manuscript left by him.

The picture of Perth before the Reformation, as well as the narrative, is reproduced in the *Book of Perth*. The story is also copied by Peacock, Penny, and others.

We can only notice two more articles in the text of this book. The first, that of "St. Andrews and the Introduction of Christianity to Scotland," is of much interest and good writing. The second, under the title of "Abbotsford," David Morison has left us a tender and loving account of Sir Walter Scott. He was an ardent admirer of this great Scotsman, knew him personally, and had evidently visited him at his home of Abbotsford. He is generally credited as being the writer of some of the notes to *The Fair Maid of Perth*.

Amongst his other studies, David Morison included that of chemistry. He established the well-known ink work at Perth so long carried on by the Todds, and now by Messrs. Moncrieff.<sup>1</sup> He also carried on a colour-printing establishment

<sup>1</sup> We have seen two advertising cards of David Morison's, which read: "The celebrated new writing inks, the red and black diamine, sold here. Morison's London and Liverpool Writing Ink Manufactories." In the centre of the card is a silhouette of Sir Walter Scott sitting at a table writing. The second card is similar, only Sir Walter is silhouetted full length. The addresses of the manufactures are given, namely, 12 Wilson Street, Finsbury, London, and 31 Duke Street, Liverpool. There is no mention of the factory at Perth. Possibly he had sold the Perth business to the Todds by this time. There is depicted on the second card a Janus head, with D.M. on a shield below.

near Paul Street, in a building which had previously been used as a church. Here he printed in colour in various textures, wall-papers, designs on velvet and cotton. He also invented cretonne floral designing and printing, but he did not reap the profit of his discoveries.

He is presumably the editor of the *Perthshire Guide*, first published in 1812.<sup>1</sup> This book is embellished by many beautiful drawings of the castles and scenery of Perthshire, but it bears the marks of having been produced in haste. Doubtless it was only intended to be a temporary guide-book. A great part of the sketch of the city of Perth is taken from the older work by his brother, the *Memorabilia of Perth*.

David Morison retired from business and left Perth in 1837. He died at Villevord, Brussels, on the 13th September 1855. He was perhaps the most distinguished, as he certainly was the most versatile, of this eminent family. Much of his genius lies beyond us; but so far as local history is concerned, the promise was, with him, greater than the performance. His excellence in any of the branches of learning in which he delighted would have been fame for most men, but he strove to excel in all. Universal genius is not given to mortals.

David Morison was twice married, and left a family of three sons by his second wife, Elizabeth Jane Richmond.

David Morison's brothers were James Morison, accountant in Perth (the father of Robert Morison, who succeeded his father), and Francis Morison, who was for many years the

<sup>1</sup> Second Edition in 1813; Fourth Edition in 1824.

editor of the *Perthshire Courier*, also Assessor for the County, and afterwards County Treasurer. The merits of James and Francis Morison were, however, overshadowed by those of their more distinguished brother.

We are confident that this sketch of the Morisons of Perth, associated with our local literature, is very incomplete, but we have tried to make it as full as possible. Such as it is, it is more than any one of them would have done for themselves. Their merit was great, but their native modesty was greater. Many of their writings are anonymous, and it is sometimes difficult to find out which member of the family wrote certain articles.

To this family Perth owes much of the fame it has acquired in the literary world, and for many generations the Morisons were the literary salt of the town.

## GEORGE PENNY JOURNALIST

THE writer of the *Traditions of Perth* was in his day one of the best known men in the city. His father, although not a native of Perth, was a resident there for the greater part of his life,<sup>1</sup> and from him our author received much of the quaint information which he has embodied in his *Traditions*. P. R. Drummond, in his *Perthshire in Byegone Days*, has left us an account of George Penny, which, although very interesting, is sadly lacking in detail. Penny must have been born some time in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. In his youth he learned the then lucrative trade of a weaver; but following the bent of his mind he took to journalism, and it is as a writer that we know him. He was long connected with the *Perthshire Advertiser*, then the great Liberal paper in Perthshire, of which he was the responsible publisher up to the 20th of August 1840. The paper was then printed by John Taylor at his printing office, King's Arm's Close, High Street, and there was the office of the editor, where communications and advertisements were received.

Penny was married, and on one occasion his wife went to

<sup>1</sup> Penny's father settled in Perth shortly after 1745.  
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his office to see her husband, who unfortunately happened to be out at the time. She, however, found the key in the lock, and opening the door she left a note for him on his desk. Then she carefully shut and locked the door, and withdrawing the key she *dropped it into the letter-box*.

The following picture of Penny and his wife we take from *Perthshire in Byegone Days*:

“ Those who knew George Penny will remember how he pushed his way from Stormont Street to the East Church on Sunday, with his wife hanging on his arm, but trailing a yard behind. He argued the case with her, asserting that, with a fair start, it was quite as easy for her to keep in a line with him as to follow a yard after him ; but she refused to be convinced, and dangled still. George went on, and although she kept fast hold of his arm, he seemed perfectly unconscious of her presence, and a casual observer would certainly conclude that she belonged to the next group. Mrs. Penny’s name was Barbara, and her husband used to relate, with an intense glow of waggish recollection, how he was saluted by a street arab as he went to church, the first Sunday after his marriage.

“ ‘ As I was walking along George Street in big nuptial grandeur, with my light blue coat, velvet neck, and rich basket buttons, my white trousers terminating in an arch over my spotless wellingtons ; my young bride hanging affectionately on my arm, and both of us proudly calculating that we were bound to make an impression on the gay moving throng, when a little ragged urchin screamed from the crown o’ the causeway, “ Eh ! there goes Geordie Penny,

wi his Bawbee." Yes,' said George, 'and that's no the warst o't; for a few years afterwards, when we were able to haul little Geordie between us, along the same street, the little ragged rascal, or another of the same sort, cried, "Eh! there goes a penny-three-fardens."'''

Drummond has given this story a wide circulation, but it is none the worse of being repeated, and, besides, it is a very fair specimen of the style of that writer. George Penny cannot be ranked as a great writer, but he was a useful one; he was a literary hewer of wood and drawer of water. He was a walking embodiment of the *Perthshire Advertiser*; he was alternately reporter, paragraphist, collector of accounts, traveller, machinist, and general factotum. George stuck at nothing, and was always ready to support the *Strathmore*<sup>1</sup> and stand up for the Whigs.

How he searched diligently for news, often with success, his contemporaries bear witness, although sometimes in his simplicity he was imposed upon. His paragraphs were always understandable, clearly and distinctly expressed. He made no grandiloquent efforts; indeed, his matter-of-fact editor would not have allowed him. He was so diligent in his work, whether canvassing for advertisements, collecting accounts, or assisting the pressmen in bringing out the paper, that it was thought the great Radical paper could not survive him, or that another George Penny would never be found. He was a genial soul, without affectation, beloved by everyone.

<sup>1</sup> The second title of the *Perthshire Advertiser* was the *Strathmore Journal*, and the one by which it was then best known.

In the exciting times in which he lived the paper was often delayed in publication, and crowds of anxious purchasers patiently waited for the appearance of the *Advertiser*. Then, according to Drummond, he was ready to answer every applicant, "No, min, it's no' ready; but it's in the press"; and when at last he hands out the folded, printed news-sheet, he remarks apologetically, "Hoome's foshen in a motion," or "Ebrington has stopped the supplies."

In appearance, Penny was a tall dark man (grey in his old age), of sallow complexion and good features. As became a newspaper man, he was well informed, talkative, and pleasing in his manner.

He was proud of his native city, and carefully collected every scrap of tradition concerning its history. His *Traditions of Perth* was the work of his leisure, the result and outcome of his happiest labours. The book reflects the man. He writes simply, clearly, and in good plain English. His book will live when the more ambitious efforts of other men shall be forgotten.

He is a man with a story to tell, and he tells it in his own quiet way. His personality is never obtrusive, except when from the style we may judge that the part was intended to be anonymous. The *Traditions of Perth* has many faults; his knowledge is sometimes lacking, and some of his racy stories must be taken with a grain of salt. The author pours out his traditions with little sequence and not with much order. He has given us a very inadequate index, and the book is devoid of chapters. Notwithstanding all its drawbacks, Penny has

given us a word picture of Perth in his own day and his father's, such as few towns possess.

The *Traditions of Perth* was published in 1836. The publishers' names are those of the principal booksellers then in Perth, namely, Dewar, Sidey, Morison, Peat, and Drummond. It has no dedication; in size it is an octavo, and extends to 235 pages. This book is now very scarce and commands a good price. In the *Perthshire Advertiser* for 14th January 1841, appears a long letter on railway enterprise over the signature of George Penny. In December of the same year the Town Council voted him a sum of two pounds sterling as a remuneration for his self-imposed task of taking a census of the city. In the *Dundee and Perth Journal* for 18th December 1841, appears a contribution from Penny in rhyme, on the surnames in the *Perth Directory*.

As exhibiting the credulity of Penny, we give one or two sentences from his description of the Mill Lade: "The Lade by which these various mills are driven, is taken from the river Almond, about four miles west from Perth. It is said to have been dug through the different proprietors' grounds in one night by the military, and has been hence styled the King's Lade. The admission of the water from the Almond is regulated by a sluice, and an extensive embankment of masonry called Low's work, and the whole is subject to the inspection of the Magistrates." In whichever way we may try to account for the origin of the king's or town's lade, we have no faith in this childish theory of Penny's; it will not hold water.

Writing of the medical men of Perth, he tells many characteristics stories, and concludes thus : "At the conclusion of the American War the medical fraternity was considerably extended ; since which period the increase of their numbers has kept pace *with the augmentation of their fees.*"

Referring to the Reform agitation, and recounting the burning in effigy of Henry Dundas in front of the George Hotel, his conclusion is very amusing : "An *inflammatory* harangue having been delivered by one of the leaders, fire was set to the effigy ; the belly of which being filled with combustibles, and the head with gunpowder, poor Harry, in the face of his enemies, ended his career in a *luminous* manner and with a *good report.*"

We could cull no end of good things from the *Traditions of Perth*. The book has been used by journalists in our own day, whole pages having been reprinted without acknowledgment.

George Penny resided for long in Stormont Street, but by 1846 he must have removed to a two-storeyed ochered house at Barnhill, facing the Dundee Road, where he died possibly about 1850. We conclude this fragmentary account of Penny by a specimen of his writing, entitled "The Town Piper" :

"Down to the year 1800, in addition to a drummer, the town had an official under the above title ; the last functionary was known by the appellation of Johnny Smout, and was famous for his skill in playing the Irish pipes. Johnny's official costume was a scarlet cloak, with wide sleeves and

white cuffs, the sleeves hanging down loose by the side of his arms, and the pipes were carried under the cloak. The principal duty of Johnny Smout appeared to be, in conjunction with Gordie Munro or, as he was called, the Rough Black Dog, to go round the town every morning at five o'clock, summer and winter, and disturb all and sundry with their ill-timed harmony. There was also an evening performance at seven o'clock, when these musicians were always accompanied by an immense number of idle women and children. After Munro's death, one Sandy Bell, a regular bred drummer, succeeded him, when the improved quality of the music created quite a sensation in the town, as they paraded the streets playing 'Rosslyn Castle' and other old Scottish tunes. An officer, who had been in the Indian war against Hyder Ali, related the following anecdote in allusion to Johnny's pipes : 'As the soldiers were ascending the Ghauts, a piper struck up an old Scottish air, when the officer heard one of the soldiers in his rear say to his neighbour, "L—d, man ! does na' that mind you o' Johnny Smout in the Shoegate in the mornings ?'"

JOHN PARKER LAWSON, A.M.  
HISTORICAL AND GENERAL WRITER

JOHN PARKER LAWSON, the writer of *The Book of Perth*, is locally perhaps the least known of the literary workmen who are sketched in these pages. On the other hand, he was, in the literary circles of his time, very well known as a writer on historical and general subjects. He is one of the few who figure in this gallery who has found a niche in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and the little that excellent work tells us of him is nearly all we know. As his first contribution to literature, *The Life of Wishart the Martyr*, appeared in 1827, it is probable that the year of his birth was near the end of the eighteenth century or the beginning of the following one. He was a deacon or priest of the Episcopal Church in Scotland, and certainly in all his writings he shows himself to be a strong supporter of Episcopacy and a declared opponent of Presbyterianism. For some time he held an appointment as Chaplain in the Army, but for the latter and greater part of his life he resided in Edinburgh, where he wrote for the booksellers. He was a voluminous historical and miscellaneous writer. His name stands on the title-pages of some three-and-twenty substantial volumes, at least the catalogue of the Advocates' Library gives that number.

*The History of the Scottish Episcopal Church*, which appeared in 1843, is perhaps his best-known book, and it is still regarded as an authority. The following year he edited, for the Spottiswoode Society, the first two volumes of Keith's *History of the Affairs of Church and State in Scotland*. The work which connects him with the Fair City—*The Book of Perth*, was published in 1847, and a few years later the author had ceased his weary labours, having died in the year 1852. Lawson was a regular frequenter of the Advocates' Library, where he early made the acquaintance of the Rev. James Scott's MS. volumes relating to Perth. These manuscripts are the source from which he got the material for his *Book of Perth*.

The happiest thing about this book is its title. It is an octavo volume extending to 318 pages, the full title being *The Book of Perth, an Illustration of the Moral and Ecclesiastical State of Scotland before and after the Reformation, with Introduction, Observations, and Notes*. The publisher, Thomas G. Stevenson, was a well-known antiquarian bookseller in Edinburgh, and he, conjointly with the editor, dedicated the book to William Turnbull, advocate, then Secretary to the Society of Antiquaries. The first issue was restricted to 251 copies, ten of which were printed on fine paper, and one was printed on vellum. The price of the ordinary copies was 12s. 6d. each. The illustrations are the Seals of the Dominican and Carthusian Monasteries of Perth ; the Seal of Perth prior to the Reformation ; and, for a frontispiece, a drawing of Perth before the Reformation. This last

illustration is taken from *Sketches of Scenes in Scotland*, drawn by Lieutenant-Colonel Murray, younger of Ochtertyre, with historical and descriptive illustrations by D. Morison, Junior, and published in 1834. The source from which this picture is taken is duly acknowledged. The drawing itself is of course imaginary, the natural features of the landscape being without doubt correct. The most important architectural features are, however, so minute (being only half the size of one's thumb nail), that they are only indicatory.<sup>1</sup>

The introduction to the *Book of Perth* is well written, although we may not agree with the conclusions of the writer. In referring to the supposed Roman origin of Perth, Lawson is careful to characterise it as traditional.

Amongst the nobility and gentry who frequently gave a Provost to the town, he classes the Thrieplands of Fingask. The Thrieplands were citizens of Perth before they became county people, and they flourished at a comparatively late period.

Lawson gives lists of the charters of the monasteries of the Dominicans, the Carmelites, and the Carthusians. The Chartulary of the Franciscans having been lost or destroyed, there is no catalogue for that religious house.

In his account of the Parish Church of St. John he dis-

<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding this, a very recent writer on the history of Perth has had these drawings, if they may be so called, of the monasteries and the castle of Perth magnified and reproduced to illustrate his work. This, surely, is pandering to the modern public taste for illustration with a vengeance.

parages the well-proportioned spire, calling it a clumsy wooden erection of pyramidal form covered with lead : he says that the tower was anciently much higher, and that the nave of the church extended much farther westward, but gives no authority for these statements, with which we disagree ; although Marshall, following Lawson, says the church was anciently much longer. Lawson is in error when he says that the church was granted to the hospital (p. 60). Morison's account of the demolition of the monasteries is also given, and the book concludes with extracts from the Kirk-Session register. These extracts certainly reveal a very lax state of society ; but the writer does not show us what the morals of the people were before the Reformation. It is a fair presumption that the low state of morals after the Reformation was but a reflex of what they were before the Church was reformed. There can be no doubt that the efforts of the Reformed ministers were strenuous and sincere. However ill-directed we may now think them to have been, they were probably the best means for the times. It was no easy task to reform the corrupted lives of the people. In this work the Presbyterian Church was successful, and we do not think an Episcopalian Church would have been more so. We do not deny that an Episcopal Church might have been equally successful ; but this is no question of Church government. Our author's great grievance is that the Scottish Reformers were Presbyterians.

*The Book of Perth* is largely composed of extracts, but it is all the more valuable on that account. In his introduction

and observations, John Parker Lawson writes with a ready pen ; his style is good and terse, but his bias towards Episcopacy is so all-pervading that only the most bigoted of readers can find pleasure in perusing the work of this Episcopal apologist of the Roman Church.

## THOMAS HAY MARSHALL

1808–1882

JOURNALIST

THOMAS HAY MARSHALL, the historian of his native city, was born at Perth in a house situated in Shuttlefield Close, a thoroughfare which then led from South Street to Canal Street, in line of the new part of Scott Street. These closes or lanes were striking features of old Perth, which are now fast disappearing. The exact date of his birth was the day before the term of Martinmas of the year 1808. His father, William Marshall, was in good circumstances ; he was a combmaker to trade, and employed a number of men.

Penny, in his *Traditions of Perth*, says of him, that “he carried on a considerable trade, circular combs being then very fashionable both for boys and girls, the hair being worn long, and flowing over the shoulders.” The trade of horner, of which comb-making was a branch, is not now practised in Perth, but at one time it must have been a considerable industry. The only memorial of this once flourishing craft is found in the name “Horner’s Lane,” which still designates one of the vennels of the town.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In June 1851, while workmen were digging for the foundation of a house

Our historian was duly baptized, and was named after one of the most famous of the Lord Provosts of Perth, Thomas Hay Marshall<sup>1</sup> of Glenalmond, who had done so much to improve and beautify the city during his occupancy of the civic chair, and whose monument stands at the head of George Street. There is no doubt of the fact that the family of the subject of our sketch was related to that of the Provost whom the citizens delighted to honour. Marshall's grandfather was in the employment of the Provost, and our historian was on terms of intimacy with the descendants of his namefather, but the exact relationship cannot now be determined.

Marshall was seven years of age when Wellington gained his glorious victory of Waterloo, and the rejoicings of that time were impressed on his memory; he also remembered his father taking him to see the illuminations in celebration of that great event.

Shortly afterwards his father died; when his mother, who was named Catherine Anderson, and belonged to Kinross-shire, set herself to provide for the education and upbringing of her sons. She was a woman of great force of character and natural wit; for many years she carried on a licensed grocery business or public house in St. John Street, on the same site where now stands the office of the Bank of Scotland, opposite St. John's Church. Here her two sons, in South Street, opposite Horner's Lane, they unearthed a quantity of deer's horns, all cut into short lengths, as if intended for knife handles. They were found ten feet below the surface of the ground, and were quite fresh, but black as ebony.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Provost Marshall died in 1812.

Thomas Hay and James,<sup>1</sup> were brought up, and received an excellent education at a private adventure school, the master of which was David Reid.

In a note *re* Halkerston's Tower, page 342 of his *History*, Marshall gives us a glimpse of his youthful life, and refers incidentally to his school. Writing of Halkerston's Tower or prison, he says : "This place was above the door of the West Church, and was taken down some twenty-five or thirty years since. The writer when at school, in an old house opposite St. John's Church, remembers well of the entrance to Halkerston's Tower. It was in a very ruinous state, the wooden stair which led up to the building being very much decayed, and requiring considerable daring in those who attempted to reach the top." This note is very interesting, although the writer does not express himself as clearly as is his wont. The north porch of the West Church is the lower story of what was Halkerston's Tower, the upper stories, to which access was gained by a wooden stair, having been taken down owing to their ruinous condition. Notwithstanding the attendant danger, we doubt not but that the brothers Marshall and their schoolfellows were frequent visitors to the top of the old tower. David Reid, the master of this school, was a man of education, who, besides teaching the usual branches of elementary knowledge, communicated to his pupils the principles of science and all that was then known of electricity. He was a true teacher, who instilled in the

<sup>1</sup> James Marshall subsequently conducted a flourishing house-painter's business at Coupar Angus.

minds of those under his care a love of learning and inquiry. Marshall loved and respected his teacher, and David Reid must have been a good and talented man to have called forth the affection and respect of such a youth.

On leaving school young Marshall was apprenticed to a fashionable hairdresser named Taylor, who had a shop in George Street near the George Hotel. The profession of hairdressing was then a most lucrative one. Wigs had not gone out of fashion, and both ladies and gentlemen wore their hair powdered. Marshall soon became an expert wig-maker and an adept at his business. There was a custom in his day of attending old gentlemen in the morning at their residences. This part of the business he entered into with zest ; and he then made the acquaintance of many of the older citizens of Perth, whose interesting conversation as he attended to their toilet may have led him unconsciously to turn to literature, and which certainly stored his memory with old world stories. During his apprenticeship he had a great thirst for knowledge, and one of his haunts then was the bookselling shop kept by James Dewar, afterwards Lord Provost, where he spent much of his leisure in reading. This Perth bookseller, who took a great interest in young Marshall, was in after years part proprietor of *The Northern Warden*, a newspaper published in Dundee, and Marshall was the reporter for it in Perth.

In politics Marshall was a Liberal or Whig, and an ardent Free Churchman. *The Northern Warden* was in the Whig interest, and when political feeling ran high and parliamentary

candidates appeared on the hustings, a placard was posted bearing the words, "Down with the *Warder*, the Provost, and the Barber." The reference being to the *Northern Warder*, Provost Dewar, and Thomas Hay Marshall, the reporter. But we anticipate, and must go back.

After young Marshall had finished his apprenticeship he migrated to London, the great centre of fashion, to improve himself in his business, where he remained for a year or two, but soon returned to his native city and commenced business for himself. In 1841 he was elected a member of the Town Council for the Third Ward, but resigned his seat after serving two years. Literature was more in his line than local politics. During all these years he was writing for various newspapers, and soon he became editor of a local weekly paper, *The Perth and Dundee Saturday Journal*, published by John Fisher, Perth. To this paper he contributed many articles and stories. Amongst these articles was one on a local "character" who was best known by the name of "Coal Sandy." He was a worthy gifted with a strong imagination, and an utter disregard for truth.<sup>1</sup>

In the pages of the long-forgotton publication which we have named may be found "A Tale of the Rebellion" (p. 105) and "The Earl of Gowrie,—a Romance" (page 217), by T. H. M., but they will hardly repay perusal. In the

<sup>1</sup> "Coal Sandy," according to his own account, like "John O'Arnha'," was a great traveller. On one occasion he was relating how he had been at the world's end. "An' what did ye see thare?" asked one of his auditors. His reply came quick and ready, "O', naething but a wheen auld suns an' broken munies."

pages of the *Perthshire Constitutional* may be found an interesting account of the tombstones of the Greyfriars' burial-ground of Perth ; and in the *Perthshire Courier*, an account of the tombstones in Kinnoull Parish Churchyard.

From his earliest years he was more or less connected with the local press, and for a long time he was correspondent for the *Scotsman* newspaper ; but he never gave up his business as a hairdresser until a few years before his death,—even to the last he was writing for the newspapers. His first place of business was the shop at the corner of Bridge Lane and Castle Gable. Afterwards he removed to a shop in High Street, near Guard Vennel, where he exhibited the surgeon-barber's sign, a small brass cupping plate with a circular cut on the rim to fix on the arm and receive the blood, and the better-known emblematic parti-coloured pole, representing the arterial and venous blood and the white bandages. He occupied at different times, different shops in Skinnergate, and ultimately removed to No. 46 South Street, which was his last place of business.

The work on which Marshall's fame rests is his *History of Perth*, which, although acknowledged by himself to be very imperfect, is the best history of the town which has as yet appeared. No previous writer has formed such a clear and distinct plan and adhered to it throughout, while no subsequent writer<sup>1</sup> has attempted the whole subject. He

<sup>1</sup> As we write, the Prospectus of a new *History of Perth*, by Mr. Samuel Cowan, J.P., has just been issued. Mr. Cowan has been for a long time a citizen of Perth, and is well acquainted with its history.

has brought to his task a love for it, a clear head, a mature judgment, and an easy yet forcible style of composition.

We remember having seen the historian, who was then well advanced in years. He was of medium height, and inclined to be stout ; dark,—almost swarthy in complexion ; and, although an old man, he was not grey-haired. His features were large and strongly marked. In his younger days he must have been a man of fine presence. He was a man of powerful mind and good sense, somewhat Bohemian in his taste and careless in his dress, yet mentally he was above all these externals. He was an able writer, perfectly conscious of his own limitations and of his special weakness. Those who knew him best were quick to recognise that even his follies leaned to virtue's side. He was a delightful companion, one who never spoke ill of anyone.

Being an omniverous reader, his mind was stored with every variety of lore ; his conversation was impressive, and mostly about history, religion, and politics. He was of a decidedly religious cast of mind, although he made no parade of piety. The humorous side of his nature was also well developed, and the amusing things he said and did are often remembered when the more serious are forgotten. Throughout all his life he was perfectly happy. In his declining years he was often urged to leave Perth so that he might have enjoyed greater comfort, yet he steadily refused. Life away from his own Perth, where he had spent his years, would have been no pleasure. Like the old prophet and saint of Israel, who

loved the very stones of Jerusalem, so was he in regard to the Fair City.

On the 1st of August 1882 his eyes closed for the last time on the beloved scenes of his youth, his manhood, and his old age.

Marshall's *History of Perth* was issued from the press of John Fisher in 1849, in monthly parts, which were sold at sixpence each, and when afterwards collected and bound they form a handsome volume of 560 pages octavo. The first issue, and very possibly there was no second,<sup>1</sup> was limited to 500 copies, so that the work is now somewhat scarce, and readily fetches in the open market from 12s. 6d. to 20s. per volume, according to condition. There is but one illustration, which is given as a frontispiece. It is an engraving of Perth from the north-east, by W. & J. Gardiner, then a well-known firm of Perth engravers. This picture shows the river in the foreground, with boats sailing on it ; to the left, the spire of St. John's Church and part of the bridge ; in front and to the right, appears part of the North Inch, Charlotte Street, the steeple of St. Paul's Church, Atholl Place, The Crescent, and Rose Terrace. The picture is very much the same as may be seen to-day, looking towards the town from the grounds of Tayside, the residence of Sir Robert Pullar. It is characteristic of the writer that he has no Dedication. The Preface is manly yet modest, and from it we learn that Marshall's work must have been published before that of Peacock. After giving a List of Authorities consulted, there follows a Table of Contents,

<sup>1</sup> A second edition was advertised about 1860, but it did not appear.

showing the work to be divided into Twelve Chapters ; and in a Supplement, a memoir of Henry Adamson, with a reprint of *The Muses' Threnodie* and the *Inventory of the Gabions*. The first six chapters give the history of the town in chronological order, while the last six give an account of ancient manners and customs : Kirk-Session records ; St. John's and other churches in Perth ; account of the Monasteries ; account of King James vi.'s Hospital, and other institutions ; Literary and Antiquarian Society, libraries, schools, incorporations, political constitution, royal visits, etc. etc. The same year was published Peacock's work, *Perth, its Annals and Archives* ; but his rival's collection makes a poor show beside the well-planned work of a man who could write, and knew what he was writing about. As a writer he was quite free from jealousy ; he rather rejoiced in the success of his brothers of the pen, and was able more than most writers to value appropriately his own work.

The only reference which he makes to Peacock is in a note (p. 347, *History of Perth*). Speaking of the Dragon's Hole, a cave in the precipitous front of Kinnoull Hill, he quotes Cant's remark that "none but resolute people dare venture in to it," and goes on to say : "We daresay few grown-up persons would hazard the climbing up of a perpendicular rock of some sixteen or eighteen feet, at least it would have required resolute daring in Mr. Cant to do so, especially if his *obesity* was as great as that of the *two rival compilers* of the *History of Perth*, although the writer of these remarks, some five and twenty years ago, did not

consider it any great exploit to scramble up the rock into the ‘Dragon’s Hole.’” On page 337 appears a very just criticism of Mr. Parker Lawson’s then recently published work, *The Book of Perth*, in which he controverts the conclusions of that writer.

As a specimen of the quiet humour of Marshall, we give the following passage, which he places in the seventeenth century, but which we think is more like an eighteenth century story.

“An anecdote showing the religious enthusiasm which at this period was necessarily engendered by the almost exclusive attention given to theological subjects, may not be altogether out of place. A poor man, named Peter Mackie, who had become crazed on the subject of religion, thought he had arrived at that pitch of faith which could enable him to walk upon water. He intimated that by a certain day an experiment for doing so would take place. Accordingly, at the time appointed, an immense number of the citizens of Perth assembled on the North Inch to witness the performance of Peter on the river Tay. Peter approached the water with great apparent confidence, but paused a moment at the shore, and ordered sawdust to be thickly sprinkled over the river, to prevent the water, as he said, from dazzling his eyes. This being done, he walked, not on the water, but *into* it. Still he walked in, and in; but of course, instead of rising to the top of the water, he only sank the deeper, till at length it reached the poor man’s throat, when he lost all hope, and, amidst the laughter and derision of the assembled spectators, exclaimed in a half-

choked voice, ‘O Lord ! ye’ll surely no drown poor Peter Mackie this way, gaun ye’re ain errands.’”

The following passage, from an account of the Dissenters, graphically depicts the state of feeling in the eighteenth century :

“Mr. Glas and those who adhered to him were really the first dissenters from the Church of Scotland. In 1733, Mr. Glas erected a church in Perth, when separation from the Establishment was very uncommon. It was thought highly arrogant for a small number thus to unite, pretending to be a Church of Christ ; and for unlearned men to act as ministers, how extraordinary and presumptuous ! The clergy of the place took fire. One of them, in particular, very zealous for the national system, and highly enraged, endeavoured much to influence the Magistrates to extirpate them from the town, and preached a very inflammatory discourse for this purpose from the Song of Solomon, ‘Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that destroy our vines : for our vines have tender grapes.’ It is said also, that a certain lady, in the height of her religious zeal, on seeing Mr. Glas walking along the street, said to some bystanders, ‘Why do they not rive (tear) him to pieces.’”

The *History* bears the mark of haste; there is no errata to the book, but there should have been. The Church of St. John of Perth was granted to the monks of Dunfermline in 1126, not 1226 as stated. His description of the old Parish Church, so dear to all the natives of Perth, is rather

poor. Marshall had not the knowledge of architecture which would have enabled him to write well on this subject ; even his dimensions are incorrect.

His account of the City Hall, then recently built, is in good taste, although very short, and with this quotation we will conclude :

“The City Hall was erected a few years ago to hold public meetings and other assemblies. It is one of the largest public rooms in Scotland, measuring 98 by 66 feet, and capable of holding nearly two thousand persons. To it is attached an elegant ante-room, the walls of which are adorned with several well-executed ancient and modern paintings. It may interest the antiquarian reader to know that the City Hall stands on the site of the great college yard, gifted to the town by the Queen of James vi. in 1604.”

## DAVID PEACOCK

1787-1853

JOURNALIST

DAVID PEACOCK, the editor of *Perth, its Annals and Archives* (1849), was a native of the neighbouring County of Forfar, having been born there about the year 1787. Handloom weaving was then a most prosperous industry throughout Scotland, and at that trade his early years were spent. The weavers of that day were a remarkably intelligent class ; much of their spare time was devoted to the study and discussion of politics, and not a few of them left the seat of the loom to find their vocation in the more congenial editor's chair. Peacock, having been early attracted to journalism, was no exception. In the prime of his manhood he removed to Perth, which became the city of his adoption and his home for the long period of thirty-three years. Here he was a highly esteemed, respectable, and useful citizen.

Being a good singer and a musical enthusiast, he was chosen shortly after coming to the "Fair City," to fill the office of Precentor in the East Parish Church, and Teacher of Music in the Burgh School or Seminary. That he had a good knowledge of music is generally allowed, but he was

not remarkable as a singer. If a man's testimony to his own ability may be considered of any value (and who should know better than himself), here is what he says when writing of the educational institutions of Perth : "The ancient office of Teacher of Music, which is known to have existed in the sixteenth century, is at present occupied by Mr. David Peacock, a gentleman of acknowledged talent and long experience." Notwithstanding this personal testimonial, we have come to the conclusion that he did not have an overweening conceit of his own ability. It is the writer who speaks here, and the journalist is only telling us what others think of him.

Peacock was appointed to the office of Teacher of Music about the year 1821, at least his name appears in Morison's *Perthshire Register* for that year as holding that position. For some reason or other this office seems to have become a sinecure, and twenty years after this date we find, from a discussion which arose in the Town Council, that there were no pupils attending the singing classes. The Master of the "Sang School" was thus receiving a salary of £18 sterling per annum for doing nothing. This state of matters was declared to be a public scandal, but the matter seems to have been allowed to drop.

Peacock was much in request as a singer, and his efforts were much appreciated by his fellow-citizens. When the great Swedish singer, Jenny Lind, was brought to Perth and sang in the City Hall in September 1847, we may be sure that the enthusiasm of the citizens was shared by Peacock. Some verses were written then in praise of the great singer,

only one of which we have heard ; and as they have never been published, so far as we are aware, we give the one which we have heard recited :

“ We hae a *Peacock* o’ oor ain,  
Compared wi’ you, he’s but a sparráw,  
Five hunder pund would mak’ him fain  
To sing from June to Januara.”

These lines are intended for a tribute to Jenny Lind, and are no disparagement to the local singer. We think that they rather indicate that he held a warm place in the affections of the people.

Whatever his merit as a teacher of music may have been, there is no doubt that he was an enthusiast, and was attentive to his duties as precentor. It is recorded of him that for the long period of thirty years, during which he held the office of leader of psalmody in the East Parish Church, he was never once absent from the regular Sunday services. This we would willingly believe, but we find it elsewhere recorded (see Notes, pp. 450, 454, of *Annals and Archives*) that on two occasions he led the singing at Blair Church on Sundays when Queen Victoria visited the Duke of Atholl in 1842. He was an intimate friend and a great admirer of the celebrated John Wilson, then the best exponent of Scottish song. He organised an annual concert in Perth, and sometimes the performers were severely criticised by the opposition newspaper.

It is a curious coincidence that our historian should have been the holder of the same office (that of teacher of music)

as Henry Adamson, the poet, and the earliest of the writers on the history of Perth, who more than two hundred years before had written his lamentations of the Muses. Shortly after his settling in Perth, Peacock was employed as reporter by the proprietors of the *Perth Courier*, and he afterwards acted as sub-editor of the same paper. For twelve years he was on the staff of this the oldest of the Perth newspapers, which, when he joined it, was the only journal printed and published in the city. In 1835, George Buist, a Forfarshire man, transferred the *Constitutional* from Dundee to Perth, when Peacock severed his connection with the *Courier* and joined the staff of the new Conservative journal. Afterwards, Buist removed to Cupar Fife, and David Peacock succeeded him as editor of the *Constitutional*.<sup>1</sup>

Our historian had now attained the highest position he was to reach as a journalist: the editorship of a struggling concern established to advocate views which were not those of the great majority of the citizens of Perth. The *Con-*

<sup>1</sup> Dr. George Buist was the eldest son of the Rev. John Buist, minister of Tannadice. He was educated for the Church, and was a diligent student. He was at one time editor of the *Dundee Courier*. In 1835 he started the *Constitutional* in Dundee, but very shortly afterwards he transferred the paper to Perth. He did not conduct the *Constitutional* for long, when he removed to Cupar, where he became editor of the *Fifeshire Journal*. He afterwards went to India to become editor of the *Bombay Times*, which he conducted with ability until, owing to a disagreement with the proprietors, his engagement was terminated. He then started the *Bombay Standard*, which had such a run of success that the *Times* was brought to terms, and ultimately coalesced with the *Standard*. Dr. Buist was a man of ability and a geologist of some note; he died in 1860.

*stitutional* was then, as it is now, the organ of the Conservatives of Perthshire, and Toryism was then most unpopular. This situation was not for him a bed of roses, and he had not a free hand from the proprietors. He was too easy-going a man to have been a successful editor ; he took things as they came. His working motto might have been "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." The truth is, he was not a sufficiently able or strong man for the position he held. The courtesies between the opposing editors of Perth were in those days severely strained. We find the editor of the *Perthshire Advertiser* describing the editor of the *Perthshire Constitutional* as a vain-glorious mortal, and reporting him as having said, regarding the annual present of two fallow deer which the Marquis of Breadalbane sent to the Incorporated Trades for their Michaelmas Dinner : "For a' the time I hae been in Perth I hae'na gotten a bit." The pages of the *Advertiser* are disgraced by allusions, of which this is a specimen (1840) : "Seldom does a week pass but the columns of the *Constitutional* furnish abundant evidence that the description given by naturalists of the *Peacock*, that it is a silly bird, is most accurate."

About this time (1842) "the ten years' conflict" of the Free Churchmen was occupying the minds of men. The proprietors of the *Constitutional* were Andrew Davidson and David Clark, both solicitors, or writers, as they were then more commonly called. An article was supplied to the editor in which a fierce attack was made on the Rev.

Andrew Gray, then the minister of the West Parish Church. On the appearance of this rather strongly-worded tirade, Messrs. Clark and Davidson were afraid that they had in this case gone rather far, and might suffer damages should an action be brought against them. Accordingly they wrote privately to the reverend gentleman, apologising and blaming the editor, David Peacock, to whom they wrote a letter for publication in the paper, intimating that if anything like this attack was repeated, they would be under the necessity of at once terminating his connection with the paper. Peacock was thus blamed, we believe unjustly, and would have been made the scapegoat, had it been necessary to carry the sin of the *Constitutional* into the wilderness of immunity from a money payment. Peacock himself said, when speaking to his intimate friends on the subject, "Daum'd, I kent naething aboot it."

We feel sorry for this editor, who all his life seems to have had the misfortune of finding himself in positions which he was unfit to hold. No doubt he had his troubles, but we need not waste our sympathy, as we rather fancy his difficulties did not affect him as they would have affected a more sensitive soul. He was of a jovial nature, and he grew in girth as he increased in popularity. He was of medium height, had a dignified presence, and was generally dressed in black, with a silk hat, and always carried a cane. He drew many friends round about him, all of whom he made to serve him in some way or other. There must have been some charm about this man, who never attempted to conceal his true character, which was transparently vain and simple.

His gifts of song and story-telling must also have been part of his attraction. We could name many of his friends and intimates, but what would be the use ; although they were all highly respectable gentlemen, not one of them has distinguished himself even as he has done.

As a journalist, Peacock did not achieve much, and it was fortunate for him that the appointment to the Mastership of King James vi.'s Hospital came to him when it did. On the 4th of October 1847 he was appointed to this office, when he retired from the editorial chair ; but his connection with literature was not ended. As master of the hospital he had charge of the records of the four pre-Reformation religious fraternities of Perth, and other interesting old manuscripts, which doubtless influenced him to study the ancient history of the early capital of Scotland.

In 1849 he published the work by which he is now remembered, *Perth, its Annals and Archives*. The book was well printed by William Belford of the Perth Printing Company, and proprietor of the *Perthshire Advertiser*, in which journal it was favourably noticed. The author did not live many years after the publication of his work ; he died suddenly on the 3rd of August 1853, in the sixty-sixth year of his age. He was buried in Wellshill Cemetery, Perth, where his widow erected a monument to his memory. At the time of his death the *Perthshire Advertiser*, then the great Liberal organ in Perthshire, published an appreciative account of the life and labours of its political opponent. The *Perth Courier* also published an obituary notice, but it does not refer to his

history of Perth. We have been unable to discover the nature of the account which would likely appear in the *Perthshire Constitutional*, as unfortunately that journal does not possess a file for the year 1853. At the time of his demise he held the offices of Property and Income Tax Assessor for the City of Perth, and Surveyor to the Water Commissioners of Perth, besides his Mastership of the Hospital, his Mastership of the "Sang School," and Leader of Psalmody in the East Parish Church. From each of these offices he had some emolument, so that he must have had a considerable income.

He held for many years the honorary post of Secretary and Treasurer to the Society of High Constables of Perth. This last office kept him in close association with most of the notable citizens of his time. While he was Master of the Hospital he exerted himself with the authorities in getting a large gas lamp placed at the South Street Port. In his time also, the wall which formerly surrounded the Hospital was taken down, and the present handsome railing substituted. For his various local services he was entertained to dinner in the County Place Hall, on the 27th of March 1851, by a number of citizens.

*Perth, its Annals and Archives* (Perth, 1849), is the result of the labours of David Peacock. This book is the most pretentious of all the works relating to the history of Perth. It extends to 632 pages octavo, and is handsomely got up, being bound in cloth, with ornamental embossed work on the

front and sides, and showing the arms of the burgh in gold. The name of the publisher is that of a once well-known citizen, Thomas Richardson, who in after years was a respected Lord Provost of the city. We think the author must have been assisted by Richardson in the final stages of preparation for the press; but if so, he has not helped him enough, for, strange to tell, there is neither Index nor Table of Contents to the volume. There is, however, a "List of Illustrations," some of which are fine drawings, namely, Perth from Bridgend" and "Perth from Craigie," drawn and engraved by Gershom Cumming, Dundee; "Perth from the North Inch," "Huntingtower Castle," and "The Parish Church of St. John," drawn by W. Banks and engraved by W. H. Lizars; "Gowry House," drawn by R. Gibb in 1827 and engraved by Lizars; "The Central Bank of Scotland" (now the Bank of Scotland), also engraved by Lizars; a Map of the Railway System of Central Scotland, engraved by Gershom Cumming, bookseller and engraver; and a plan in two plates of Gowrie House, engraved by Lizars, taken from a drawing published in the *Transactions of the Literary and Antiquarian Society of Perth* in 1827, and lithographed by D. M. Jr. (*i.e.* David Morison, Junior), but originally drawn in 1806, before the building was razed, by John M'Omie, LL.D., then a teacher in Perth.

These drawings give a value to this book which it would not otherwise have; they are mostly the work of the best engravers of the time, and they would have graced a worthier production. The author in his Preface modestly disclaims

any pretension to original authorship, “his sole object and aim being to supply a compilation which had become a desideratum.” There can be no doubt that the author has attempted to supply a want, and we are thankful to him for what he has done ; his book is of considerable value, but it is not worthy of the subject. He writes in an easy, sometimes slipshod, journalistic style. To castigate a writer who presents an abject apology for having “had the presumption to undertake such a work at all,” is no pleasure.

The author has no proper sense of perspective ; he gets lost in the largeness of his subject, and displays a carelessness in his statements which is either the result of accident or ignorance. His opening sentences seem to read well, but on examination they are found to be nonsensical and incorrect. He blunders into his subject in this fashion :

“Although for centuries the seat of government, and frequently the seat of royalty, Perth could never boast of a very numerous population. It was for a long period a place of national, rather than local, importance, and the number of its settled inhabitants never exceeded that of the present day. Indeed, that number must have been comparatively small, even in the palmy days of its existence ; for the ancient walls embraced a much smaller space than the modern city covers, and in turbulent times it became necessary that the people should avail themselves of the shelter which its defences afforded. In those days, therefore, the entire population resided within the walls ; and the only edifices which were to be seen beyond them were those splendid domes connected

with monastic institutions, which for several centuries previous to the Reformation adorned the ‘Fair City,’ and whose inmates were safe in the religious halo which was held as surrounding them, and their religious dignity, which was always respected. The early importance of Perth must therefore be looked for in something else than as a mart for commerce or manufactures, a seat of learning, or a place of defence.”

Although the population of Perth in ancient times did not exceed that of Peacock’s day,—in fact it must have been very far short of it,—still the ancient town was, comparatively speaking, a large and prosperous one. Instead of saying the “number must have been comparatively small, even in the palmy days of its existence,” he ought to have said, Although small, compared with modern towns, the population of Perth must have been comparatively large in the palmy days of its existence.

Then he speaks of the “splendid domes connected with monastic institutions,” when it is well known there were no domical buildings in Scotland in those days. He here uses a word the meaning of which he carelessly forgets. His conclusions regarding the early importance of Perth being drawn from wrong premises, are entirely erroneous. Perth of ancient days was one of the greatest of commercial towns. The learning of those days being confined to the Church, it may be said to have been a seat of learning. And it was a place of defence, being the only walled town in the kingdom. It was because Perth possessed all these three things, trade,

learning, and defence, that she was a place of importance and the early capital of Scotland.

Here is a paragraph from Peacock which cannot be substantiated :

"Upon the whole, Perth is generally recognised as the most ancient town in Scotland, and dates its origin from a period within less than a century of the Christian era. It is in some degree traditional, but never called in question, that it was founded by the Romans, when Agricola and Lollius Urbicus preferred it as a grand central military station. Every one has heard of the exclamation ascribed to the Roman invaders, when, coming from the south, the beautiful plain and river broke upon their view. 'Behold the Tiber!' 'behold the Field of Mars!' is said to have been the simultaneous shout. No wonder they were struck with the matchless scene, as Sir Walter Scott pronounces it to be, especially as it was so much superior to their own favourite river, which with its dull current and yellow mud, can never compare with the crystal waters of the Tay."

We have already traced this legendary story in our account of Henry Adamson, who is the poetical father of it. It is a beautiful story—one of the best of the poetical conceptions of the poet of Perth, but it is pure romance. Perth may have been founded by the Romans—it may have been their Victoria, but there is not a vestige of proof that it was.

We suppose it must have been carelessness, but if so it is inexcusable, which leads Peacock to write, on pages 13 and

46, of "Adamson's notes to Gall's poem," when he quotes large portions of James Cant's notes to Adamson's poem.<sup>1</sup>

Peacock's conception of what he is writing about is as clear as mud—his mind is thoroughly jumbled. Our "compiler," as he called himself, makes a free use of Sir Walter Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather* in connecting his history, which he duly acknowledges. Here is a piece of irritating namby-pamby which he perpetrates when writing of Macbeth (page 23): "As the most important circumstances of his history may be known to comparatively few who have not read Shakespeare's celebrated drama founded thereon (and there is at least a portion of those under whose notice this book may fall who never read plays), it has been deemed proper to extract, at length, Sir Walter Scott's simple narrative, as given in *Tales of a Grandfather*, and founded on Hollinshed's history of the period. The story is very interesting; and as it is minute, without being tedious, may be perused with some gratification by those who are pretty well informed in regard to the great leading facts, from their acquaintance with Shakespeare's inimitable historical drama, in which these are prominently and graphically brought out." Then there follows eight pages from Sir Walter, who is frequently quoted throughout the book.

The account which Peacock gives of the clan Battle of the

<sup>1</sup> The poem referred to is *The Muses' Threnodie*, which was written by Henry Adamson and published in 1638. James Cant published a second edition of this poem in 1774, with notes, and this book is sometimes called Cant's *History of Perth*. Gall was one of the speakers in the poem.

Inch, is taken from the well-known novel, *The Fair Maid of Perth*, surely a strange source from which to draw the facts of history. This is a book of quotations—the writer says so in his Preface;—it is his method of writing history. *The Annals and Archives of Perth* is a piece of literary patch-work very badly done. Perhaps it is as well that he has compiled his book in this manner, as he was evidently not competent to undertake the task in any other. Other historians use quotations to support and confirm themselves in their opinions and positions; this writer makes quotations take the place of his text. He does occasionally write something himself. Here are two sentences of genuine Peacockian flavour which are part of a paragraph dealing with the time of King James I. of Scotland, and in which he outspreads and displays all the gaudiest feathers which he conveniently finds: “The burgesses of those days had often to buckle on their armour, and to do battle in defence of their King and of their own rights; and the citizens of Perth again and again maintained bravely the assertion contained in their motto, ‘Pro Rege, Lege, et Grege.’ Of their prowess in the field, and their undaunted bravery in action, *Henry Wynd* presents a noble instance” (page 103). Such words as these might fitly be used by an irresponsible scribbler, but they are unbecoming a historian. True, our writer does not call himself a historian, but he has ventured to give us a book of the Annals of Perth.

Far be it from us to minimise the bravery of the citizens of Perth of any age. They did have to fight for their king;

but if the truth must be told, their bravery was never conspicuous,—they were tradesmen and merchants; they were not men-at-arms. They were conscious of their weakness; consequently they always allied themselves with the neighbouring nobles, and from that warlike class they selected their Provost. In support of such a statement we want a better instance than that of a hero of romance. Doubtless Henry of the Wynd was a brave man, although somewhat rash and foolhardy; but all that history tells us of him, is that for half a french crown, with the promise of a pension should he survive, he took the place of another in the pitched clan Battle on the Inch, and his side was successful. Then in reference to the motto, “*Pro Rege, Lege, et Grege,*” it was unknown to the Perth of those days, but was adopted after the Reformation, when the previous coat-of-arms was discarded as being reminiscent of popery.

Several subjects connected with Perth and its history are given in the concluding portion of the volume, the first of which is one on royal visits, where the author gives very good and graphic accounts of Queen Victoria’s early visits to Perth. His narrative is not altogether of his own composition (as he himself says); “he has occasionally preferred the language of others to his own, when he found it more suitable.” The book concludes with a well-written memoir of Henry Adamson, giving all the known facts of his life, and a reprint of his poem, *The Muses’ Threnodie*. Writing of the character and manners of the citizens of Perth of his own time, he says (page 513): “They are intelligent rather than

intellectual ; speculative ; and in their communication, political and controversial rather than literary and sentimental. . . . During a thirty years' intercourse, he scarcely ever found a social party disposed to engage in literary conversation." We believe this description to be generally correct, but fortunately there were some exceptions ; these would not be found in the company frequented by David Peacock, who, although not a native of Perth, was a product of such a state of Society.

P. R. DRUMMOND, F.S.A.(SCOT.)

1802-1879

ESSAYIST

THE Drummonds had long been tenant farmers in the parish of Madderty, Perthshire, where they were highly respected. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, John Drummond was tenant of the farm of Dubheads, Craigs of Madderty, which he held of Miss Preston, who afterwards married Sir David Baird, the hero of Seringapatam.

This Perthshire farmer had a number of sons, one of whom, Peter Robert Drummond, the subject of this sketch, was born in 1802. He received his early training at the Parish School of Madderty, of which the then master was the Rev. David Malcolm, LL.D., a poet and a scholar who is now very much forgotten; but a delightful sketch of him by his quondam pupil may be read in *Perthshire in Bygone Days*.

Dr. Malcolm found in young Drummond an apt pupil—one who delighted in the glories of nature and art. Little did Sir David Baird imagine that the small farmer's boy whom he accosted on the road to Crieff, was in after years to write of him and his doings in Perthshire; nor would it have been then thought likely that the celebrated painters, Raeburn

and Wilkie, were to have their pictures of the famous general so fearlessly criticised by this country youth.

John Drummond's boys were now growing into young men, and were known among the rustics of Madderty as "the fashionables." Country folks are ever ready to describe a man by a word or phrase, but this description only referred to one of the phases of the Drummond youths.

P. R. Drummond early imbibed a love for nature, and from nature to art was an easy transition. He tells us in his account of Lawrence Macdonald, the Scottish sculptor, whom he first met in 1816, how often he trudged to Gask to see the clay figures which the future sculptor had made, and which adorned his youthful home.

About this time young Drummond must have been sent to Glasgow, where he was for a number of years assistant to his uncle, a provision dealer. What a change for the country youth? We can fancy him longing to be at home in the heart of Perthshire, but the busy town as well as the country had attractions for him.

His love of pictures and art developed in Glasgow; he tells us that as he went to and from his business in King Street, he contrived to pass the house of Mr. Dunn, a rich Glasgow merchant, whose full-length portrait by John Graham, afterwards John Graham Gilbert, was hung on the north wall of the corner room, and about level with Buchanan Street pavement. Possibly this apprentice lad derived more pleasure in the rich colouring of this picture than did the wealthy owner.

During the three years that Dr. Thomas Chalmers was minister of St. John's Parish Church of Glasgow, and when Edward Irving was his assistant, Drummond was a seat-holder in the church. By the year 1832 he had left Glasgow, and had started a library and bookshop in Perth, where he made the acquaintance of Robert Nicoll, the Perthshire poet, whose life he afterwards wrote. He occupied three shops in Perth—first, No. 15 High Street; then the shop opposite, at the corner of St. John Street, No. 32; and afterwards, No. 46 George Street.

In 1847, in conjunction with Ed. Glover, he brought Jenny Lind, the famous vocalist, to Perth, where she sang in the City Hall, then recently erected. He was an ingenious mechanic, and showed at the first London Exhibition a churn, for which he was awarded a medal. In 1859 he exhibited his collection of pictures in the Exchange Hall, Perth, and the same year he attended the Burns' Centenary at Dumfries. His old love for country scenes returning on him, he retired from business and leased the farm of Bamblair, near Perth, which, however, he soon gave up (1873). He then retired to Ellengowan, near Almondbank, where he devoted himself to writing his *Perthshire in Bygone Days*, which was published in 1879 shortly before his death.

Amongst the many writers on Perth and Perthshire, P. R. Drummond takes a high place. His *Perthshire in Bygone Days* (London, 1879) is a most instructive and entertaining book, and with general readers it is a first favourite amongst local works. His humour is rollicking. As a story-teller he

excels ; his sketches of the men and women of Perthshire, its scenery and poetry, are all done with love and feeling. He may occasionally rate his poets too highly, but that is a fault which leans to virtue's side. He sometimes indulges in flights of philosophy, which the critical reader may consider the weakest parts of his work. As an art critic he is decided in his opinions ; and as his knowledge of painting is extensive, he may be considered a safe guide. If he introduces his own personality too freely, it only heightens the effect ; we never knew a good *raconteur* who did not have confidence in himself. He has written his own life in his sketches of the lives of other men.

Drummond was a man of great individuality and power. He was perfectly conscious of this himself, and he was never afraid to match himself with the best. He wrote about the things he knew and loved ; he admired the varied scenery of Perthshire ; he revelled in its songs and ballads ; and he delighted in the men, gentle and simple, of whom he has written. Although a Conservative in politics, yet he was the constant friend of Robert Nicoll, the poet and radical journalist. In appearance he was of medium height, stout, almost burly ; intelligence shone in his face, and humour constantly twinkled in his eye. P. R. Drummond died on the first of September 1879, and was buried in Wellshill Cemetery, Perth.

The following quotations from his sketch of Thomas Graham, Lord Lynedoch, shows Drummond at his best as a writer—vigorous, yet tender and sympathetic :

“In my youthful days I paid many visits to the old house of Balgowan, the birthplace of Thomas Graham, some of them before he fought at Barossa or even at Corunna. There was a charm in the desolate look of the place, and in the unchecked privilege of peeping in at the half-shuttered windows, and counting the hundred swallows’ nests perched in the eaves, and in the sorrowful tale of the handsome young lady whose death had blighted the gilded corridors, and in place of whose gentle hand and ever-welcoming smile, there was nothing but great rusty bars and iron-clenched doors. These raised an awe and regret hardly of this world. Many times have I stood for hours while the beams of the setting sun struggled eerily through the half-opened casements, and in imagination seen the beautiful Mary Cathcart, with her riding-whip and tiny gold spur, come tripping along the lobby, and with slight aid from her groom place herself in the saddle, and go curveting across the lawn. But, alas! there was no lawn ; the place was engulfed by huge trees, masses of impervious underwood, and grass-covered roads that had not received the imprint of a horse’s hoof for seventeen years ; and Mary—the beautiful and accomplished Mary Graham — lay silent and solitary in Methven Kirkyard.”

We will give one more extract from *Perthshire in Bygone Days*, which shows Drummond in quite another mood. Writing about a hotel in London at which he frequently lodged, he proceeds :

“This is the house to which a Perth friend of mine went to board on the occasion of his first visit to London. On

his return, his mother asked, ‘Where did you lodge in London?’ ‘At 22 Ironmonger Lane, Cheapside,’ he replied. ‘O’ ay, Jamie,’ said the old lady; ‘I was sure, if there was a cheap-side in a’ London, ye wad find it out!’

“For some years before and after 1835, this rather well-frequented Scotch house was tenanted by Joseph Andrews and Kirsty his wife; but one morning, the year before the coronation of our good Queen Victoria, Joseph put on his best suit, packed up his portmanteau, and having placed a nice little pile of carefully selected sovereigns in the breast pocket of his coat, he told his watchful spouse that he was going down to Greenwich to spend a day with an old shipmate. Being naturally somewhat of a sea-faring disposition, the proposal did not surprise her much; so he went off without the better horse exercising her veto. Next day he returned not, nor next week, nor next year. Nay, for five long years did this lone woman fret and pine, and worry her customers by declaring, ‘I might as well have no husband at all.’

“Eventually she lost patience, and married a second husband right off, keeping her own secret and the old door-plate. But ‘the course of true love never did run smooth,’ and one morning the great bell of St. Paul’s had just rung out five, and day was breaking, when the brass knocker of No. 22 struck the hollow door like a sledge-hammer, sending its echoes through every hole and cranny between Gresham Street and Cheapside. The door was opened, and a stranger carrying a carpet bag came boldly into the passage. He wore a rough sailor’s jacket, and a fur cap with the flaps turned down over his ears, and was altogether rather too fierce-looking for the newly-wakened girl’s nerves. ‘Do you

want a bed, sir?' she asked timidly. 'I want the mistress,' said Bluebeard, striding up the first flight of steps. 'She is in bed, sir,' said slavey. 'I will go to her,' said Bluebeard. 'Oh no, sir?' said slavey, and ran to intercept him; but with undaunted presumption and mysterious geographical knowledge, he went straight to mistresses' room, and, going in, proceeded to shake up the dame. The poor girl listened nervously, expecting to hear a shout of murder. She did not wait long when a round oath came from the scene of conflict, followed by a loud scream and a half-smothered under-current of swearing. Speedily the stranger came out of the room, and that with greater force than a man was likely to come of his own volition, and a pair of boots followed him with as fierce impetuosity as if they had been charged with gunpowder. The stranger remonstrated, but 'they knew not Joseph.' Bluebeard walked into the parlour, and, throwing off his cap and coat, ordered breakfast" (p. 156).





*From Photo by*

WM. SIEVRWRIGHT,  
1823-1905.

[*Henderson, Perth.*

## WILLIAM SIEVWRIGHT

1823-1905

LOCAL WRITER

WILLIAM SIEVWRIGHT was born at Brechin on the 22nd of May 1823. During his tender years he was a scholar at two different schools of his native city, but he cannot be said to have learned much then, as he left school and was set to manual labour when but eleven years of age. To set a young boy so early to work may seem to us very hard lines, but his was no uncommon case in the beginning of the nineteenth century. After all, education is not so much what we learn at school as what we learn throughout our lives.

By the time he had reached his sixteenth year, thought had begun to stir within him; he saw things the eye could not see, he heard things the ear could not hear, and he felt that which the hand could not touch. Literature—the written thought of great minds—had at this time a most absorbing interest for him. From the age of thirteen to that of twenty-nine he worked at the trade of shoemaking, serving five years as an apprentice, seven years as a journeyman, and four years as a master. He was not destined, however, to

stick to the *last*. A new career opened up for him, when in 1852 he was appointed an agent of the Edinburgh City Mission. For eight years he laboured amongst the poor and neglected of the Greenside district of the capital. His next appointment was one under Government, that of Scripture Reader in the General Prison for Scotland at Perth, where he faithfully laboured for more than thirty years. On his retirement he continued to reside at Perth, where he was an esteemed and respected citizen. Although retired from the active duties of life he was never idle; to the end of his long life his pen was evident with work of some sort for the good of his fellows.

The following list gives some of the works published by our author, who died suddenly at his residence in Craigie on the 5th of May 1905 :

*Historical Sketch of the Perth Cricket Club.* Perth, 1880.

*Historical Sketch of the Congregational Church, Perth.* Perth, 1885.

*Epitaphs, Quaint, Curious, and Miscellaneous, collected and arranged, with Notes.* Perth, 1902.

*Greyfriars' Burying-Ground: its Epitaphs and Inscriptions.* Perth, 1893.

*Supplement to Greyfriars' Burying-Ground: its Epitaphs, etc.* Perth, 1894.

*Historical Sketch of the old Dépôt.* Perth, 1894.

*Historical Sketch of the General Prison, Perth.* Perth, 1894.

*Complete History of Perth Cricket from 1812 till 1894, with Sketches of Players.* Perth, 1896.

William Sievwright was grave in his appearance and gentle in his manner ; of medium height and erect bearing ; buoyant in mind and body, he carried his tale of years well, looking much younger than he really was. He was intimate with Robert S. Fittis, who was only one year younger than he was ; the subjects which interested both men being many. Fittis was very generous in his appreciation of the work of our author. When Sievwright's *Supplement to the Greyfriars' Burying-Ground and its Epitaphs* was published, the notice which appeared in the *Perthshire Courier* newspaper was from the pen of his brother historian, and with this able criticism we are heartily in accord. He who had made literature his lifelong work, and more especially local literature, says :

“ Mr. Sievwright has now crowned his painstaking and eminently useful labour by publishing an elaborate supplement to his previous collection of *Epitaphs and Inscriptions in the Greyfriars' Burying-Ground*. By thus completing his work, he has undeniably laid the public of Perth, and everybody else connected with Perth, under a deep obligation, which will be more and more acknowledged as time rolls on its course. The want of such a collection as the compiler has now enabled us to possess, has often been felt by local genealogists and others interested in disputed successions to heritable and movable estates, as well as by inquirers respecting obscure points in the history of the municipality. It was reserved for Mr. Sievwright to devote his leisure, during many months, to the transcription of all the decipherable inscriptions in the Greyfriars ground, and certainly his indefatigable assiduity

has been successful beyond expectation. Daunted by no difficulties,—and many presented themselves,—he patiently overcame everything in his way. . . . It may well be said, and we say it with unavailing regret, that, like virtue, the arduous work accomplished by Mr. Sievwright will have to be its own reward. With him it has been wholly a labour of love. To Mr. Sievwright, however, is left the enduring satisfaction of having produced books which will carry down his name to posterity."

In many respects these two writers were widely different in character and temperament. Fittis, although warm-hearted, was assertive and often violent, his voice rising to a shriek. Sievwright, on the other hand, although firm in his opinions, was always calm and quiet. In their love for literature and local history, however, they were united.

Sievwright, although no sportsman, was an ardent spectator of the fine game of cricket, and he was a regular attender at the great matches on the North Inch of Perth. He often said that "he had faith in this pastime as a beautiful form of recreative life and amusement." Accordingly, with the desire of inciting young lads to cultivate a healthy, bracing, and delightful open-air exercise, he set himself to write the *History of the Perth Cricket Club*, the premier club of Scotland. This work, which extends to 120 pages of small octavo, was published in 1880. The cricketers of Perth and Perthshire must be congratulated in having this excellent record of the annals of the fine game which had Perth for its Scottish birthplace.

The enthusiasm of the author impelled him, fifteen years later, to produce a *Complete History of Perth Cricket from 1812 to 1894*, with sketches of players. This work appeared in numbers in a local newspaper up to the 128th page, when they unfortunately terminated, and in order that his labour might not be altogether lost, the writer finished a number of the volumes in manuscript. This extended volume on Perth Cricket will in future years be, by book lovers, one of the most prized of Perth books, on account of its intrinsic worth, its small issue, and its uncommon character. This book was noticed in the *Perthshire Courier* in the following glowing terms :

"To say that the author deserves credit for his arduous performance would be but the scantiest praise. His patient research and unwearyed application merit the highest encomium, and can never be adequately recompensed. This and his other local works will give him a unique and enduring position in what may be termed the literary history of the Fair City."

Another work which deserves special mention is his *Historical Sketch of the Congregational Church, Mill Street, Perth*, the Church of which he was so long a devoted member, and which is now united with the Evangelical Union Congregation. The earliest chapters of this short sketch are interesting, as showing the state of religion in Perth, and to some extent throughout Scotland. The subject is treated in an easy yet reverent manner, and in this small work our author is seen at his best.

We have some difficulty in selecting some passages for quotation from the writings of our author, for although what he has written is extremely interesting, it is not what may be called fine writing. The *Historical Sketch of the old Dépôt*, or prison for French prisoners of war at Perth, affords us some passages, which we transcribe in order to show the style of the writer :

"During the comparatively brief struggle between Napoleon I. and the powers of Europe, which finally terminated in his complete overthrow at Waterloo, many thousands of French prisoners of war were sent to spend their captivity in this country. Military prisons were built in various places throughout the kingdom ; Perth, as is well known, being chosen as one of the cities to which large contingents of men were to be sent, for whose reception extensive buildings had been erected, which were originally known—and are still spoken of—by the name of the Dépôt. They occupied the site of the General Prison, a considerable portion of them, as we shall see, being still intact, having been utilised during these past fifty years for various purposes by the General Prison authorities.

"I have often met persons inquiring about this old French prison, and come across various floating and contradictory traditions regarding it, but have never seen any accurate or reliable account of it. I have hence endeavoured, by some little research, to draw up a brief sketch of the Dépôt, which to many may possibly be of some interest. Originally the Dépôt occupied somewhere between eight and nine imperial acres of ground, which was acquired *by purchase* in 1811 in

the time of Sir David Moncrieffe, the grandfather of the present proprietor, Sir Robert. I have, of course, no means of knowing how it came about that that portion of ground had been so acquired, instead of by feu."

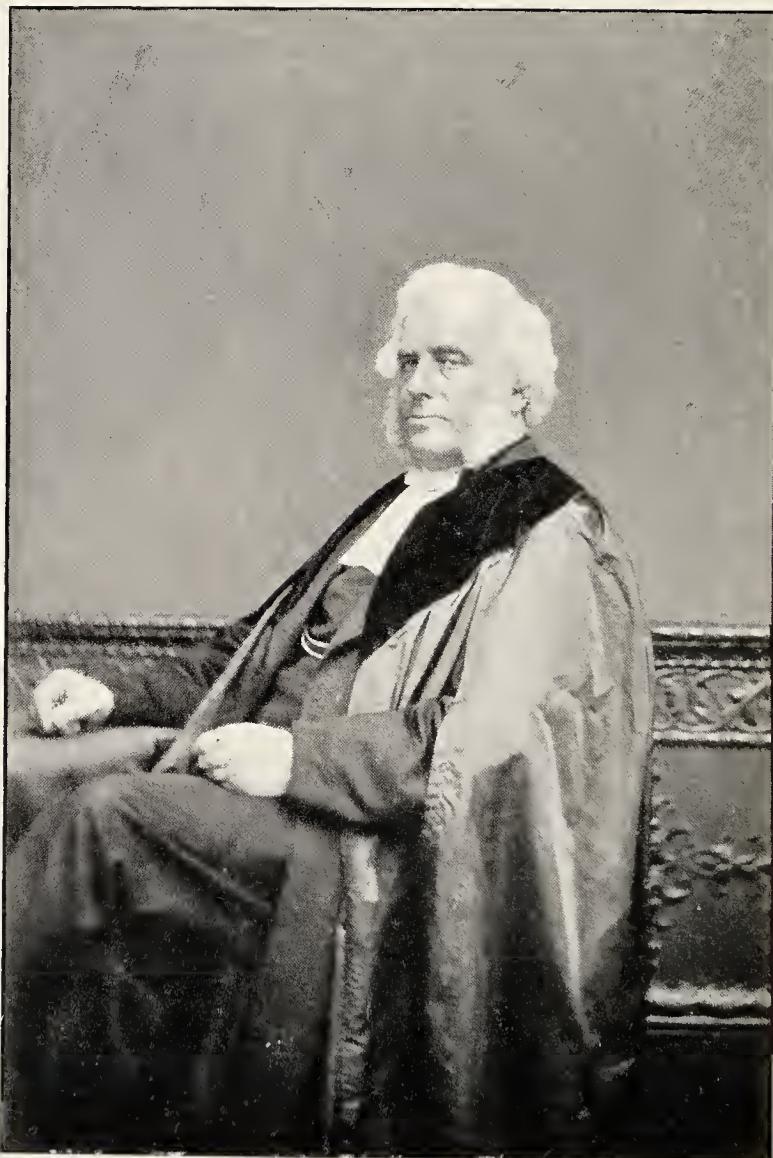
Sievwright's *Historical Sketch of the General Prison, Perth, with Notes on Crime and Criminals*, is an octavo volume extending to 308 pages, the latter and major part of which is devoted to his notes on crime, while the first chapters give an account of the history and management of the institution. The history is of local interest, but the notes are of general interest, and are the outcome of the writer's life-work amongst criminals. The keynote of the whole book is struck in the words of the Apostle James, "He which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

Although long a resident in Perth, William Sievwright never forgot the place of his birth, and much as he loved Perth he kept up his correspondence with his friends in Brechin. He was a regular contributor to the pages of the *Brechin Advertiser* for many years. Of the many articles and serials of his which have appeared in this newspaper only two have appeared in book-form, namely : *Brechin Faces of the Olden Time; being Brief Sketches of Old Citizens* (Brechin, 1902), and *The Old Ports, Brechin, in Olden and Modern Times* (Brechin, 1903).

Our author made no claim to be regarded as a literary man, save in his love of literature. Regarding his own work

he was extremely modest ; he wrote for his own pleasure—not for fame or money—in the hope that what he did write would prove useful to others. What he has written may be regarded as minor work, but had he not been moved to tackle it the work would very likely have been left undone. His books are much used for reference, and William Sievwright well merits the high appreciations which we have quoted.





*From Photo by]*

*[Horsburgh, Edinburgh.]*

REV. WM. MARSHALL, D.D.,  
1807-1880.

WILLIAM MARSHALL, D.D.  
OF COUPAR ANGUS  
1807-1880

WILLIAM MARSHALL was born early in the year 1807 at the hamlet of Meadowmore, in the Logie-Almond district of Perthshire. His parents filled a humble sphere, but were most anxious that their son should receive the best education which it was in their power to give him. Perhaps his mother had a vision of her son as a leader of men ; at all events, she was not wrong in recognising him as “a proper child.” The rudiments of his education he received at an adventure school in the hamlet of Tulliebelton, in the parish of Auchtergaven, and some miles away from his home. This humble educational institution was a one-roomed thatched cottage, with a fire in the middle of the floor, the smoke from which found its way to the outer air by a hole in the roof. The fuel for this fire was supplied by the scholars, each of whom brought a peat every morning. Such schools were common throughout Scotland in those days, and under such untoward circumstances the scholars were grounded in the elements of reading, writing, and arithmetic, besides being taught mathematics, Latin, and even Greek. A fine school

does not always make a fine scholar. The name of the teacher of this modest academy was David Marshall, afterwards a minister of the Secession Church at Lochee. The name Tulliebelton recalls to our memory that Robert Nicoll, the poet, was born at the farmhouse of Little Tulliebeltane some seven years after the birth of William Marshall. His birth and upbringing was quite as lowly and hard as that of Marshall, but his genius was greater. He had that in which the elder man was lacking, the gift of imagination and poesy.

From his first school William Marshall was sent to the Academy at Perth, where he studied for a short time before he entered the University of Glasgow, which he did in his thirteenth year. After two years' study at Glasgow, he then for some reason removed to Edinburgh, where he passed other two years at the university there. The young student had early been imbued with a love for learning, and his college career was a successful one. At this time he became teacher of the village school where first he learned letters, and afterwards at the village school of Cottertown of Nairne, in the Perthshire parish of Moneydie.

He was admitted a student of Divinity at the hall of the United Secession Church in 1824. Dr. Dick, the minister of Greyfriars' Church, Glasgow, was the theological professor, and the students met in the vestry of his church. The Divinity course at this time extended to five years, but the attendance of the students was only required for two months of each year, namely, August and September. During all this time he supported himself by teaching, at Airntully in the

parish of Kinclaven, and also at Coupar Angus. At the conclusion of his course at the Divinity Hall, where his professor esteemed him as a highly meritorious scholar, he was licensed to preach the Gospel by the United Secession Presbytery of Perth, the court whose deliberations he was subsequently to guide as its clerk for so many years.

In a short time the young preacher was unanimously called by two congregations which were desirous of having him for their minister. These were the church at Whithorn in Galloway, and the church at Coupar Angus in Perthshire. The Synod (the highest court of the United Secession Church), which decided in all cases of competing calls, evidently thought that our young minister could best serve God and the Church at Coupar Angus, and accordingly he was ordained minister of that congregation on the 28th December 1830. At this time he was but twenty-three years of age, but he had had much experience of life, and his mind, always of a juridical cast, was mature. He was much esteemed by the people of Coupar Angus. He was an exception to the proverb quoted by our Lord, for he was a prophet having honour in his own country. This goodwill he managed to retain throughout his life by careful attention to his life's work, and by kindly solicitude for the spiritual welfare and worldly prosperity of his people.

He did not settle down to a life of ease ; he was a man of great activity, not only mentally, but physically. He lived also in stirring times—the Reform Bill had just become law, and that period of ecclesiastical controversy which has been

entitled by Free Church historians, *the Ten Years' Conflict*, was about to commence. The Voluntary question, also, was stirring the hearts and minds of the United Secession ministers and people. Into this last controversy Marshall threw himself with an ardour which never slacked throughout his long life. He was strenuous for that which he thought to be right.

In 1835 he married Leah, daughter of the Rev. Dr. David Young, minister of the North United Secession Church, Perth. His father-in-law was an eminent man, one of the ablest all-round men who ever filled the high position of a minister in Perth. Marshall found his father-in-law to be likeminded with himself on many important questions. They were both members of the same Presbytery. His intimate relationship with Dr. Young did not, however, prevent his forcible expression of a difference of opinion upon occasion, and his father-in-law did not spare Marshall in debate. Yet withal these two were faithful and loving brothers in Christ. Marshall loved and respected Dr. Young. He wrote the memoir of the doctor for a memorial volume of his sermons which was published in 1858. In this memoir Marshall pays an eloquent tribute to the goodness of the heart and the greatness of the mind of his father-in-law.

In 1865, William Marshall received the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of New York, and one month afterwards he had the same honour conferred on him by the Presbyterian College of Hamilton. This was for him a year of well-deserved honours, for he was the same year elected Moderator of the United Presbyterian Synod.

Dr. Marshall published in 1873 *The Principles of the Westminster Standards, Persecuting*, and, two years later, *Men of Mark in British Church History*. He also wrote for the *Weekly News*, “Historic Scenes in Forfarshire, in Fifeshire, in Kincardinshire, and in Perthshire.” These last-mentioned works were written evidently more for relaxation than as a serious study. At this time his health had somewhat broken down, and his congregation arranged to have a colleague and successor appointed to enable him to carry on his ministerial duties.

*The Historic Scenes of Forfarshire* and *The Historic Scenes of Perthshire* were published in separate volumes, and it is in consequence of the latter work that Dr. Marshall finds a place in this portrait gallery. This local historical work is a handsome volume in small quarto, and although published by Oliphant, Anderson, & Ferrier of Edinburgh in 1881, it was printed at the office of the *Dundee Courier and Argus* and *Weekly News*. The book opens with an account of the City of Perth, which takes up some fifty-five pages. Following our custom of quoting from the works of our writers, we take from the *Historic Scenes*, Marshall’s notice of an eminent man who did much for the improvement of Perth and the elevation of her citizens, who has not up to this writing been sufficiently referred to in this volume :

“Adam Anderson, LL.D., was appointed Rector of the Academy in 1809, and in 1837 he was raised to the Chair of Natural Philosophy in the United College of St. Andrews, which he filled till his death in 1846. He was one of the

most scientific men of his age, and shed much lustre on both the Academy and University. He left several memorials of himself in Perth, which are highly honouring to his memory. He originated the idea of supplying the city with water from Moncrieff Island ; formed the plan for carrying the idea into effect ; and superintended the execution of it. The water reservoir, which overlooks the Tay at the foot of Marshall Place, is one of the most admired architectural ornaments of Perth. Only a few days before his death he cyphered with chalk the inscription which the edifice now bears in cast-iron letters, *Aquam igne et aqua haurio.*<sup>1</sup>

“Dr. Anderson laid Perth under a like obligation in connection with its gas supply. He acted as engineer in the first introduction of gas into it, and we presume that the inscription on the old gaswork in Canal Street was of his suggestion, MDCCCXXIV. *Non fumum ex fulgore, sed ex fumo dare lucem.*”<sup>2</sup>

The *Historic Scenes* is a very useful book of reference. It was written for a popular weekly newspaper, and it served its purpose well.

Dr. Marshall died at Dysart on the 23rd August 1880, whither he had gone to fulfil a clerical engagement. Although feeling out of sorts, he set out on the Sabbath morning for the church where he was expected to preach. On reaching the vestry he became worse, and was forced to give in and retrace his steps to the manse. Everything was done for him which medical skill could devise. His wife was able to be

<sup>1</sup> I draw water by fire and water (*i.e.* steam).

<sup>2</sup> Not to elicit smoke from splendour, but light from smoke.

with him in his last hours, and in this his last battle he was enabled calmly to resign his spirit to the God whom he had served, giving thanks to Him who had gotten him the victory. His death took place on the Monday following his seizure, and his body was reverently carried to Coupar Angus, and buried in the old churchyard beside the Abbey ruins. There rest his remains beside the other three ministers who had preceded him in the pulpit of the Secession Church, each of whom has a simple headstone to mark his grave. The monument to Dr. Marshall records that he was for fifty years pastor of the congregation, and that the stone of remembrance was raised as "a tribute of affection by his congregation and friends," with the words of holy writ which he had made his own added, "I know whom I have believed."

Dr. Marshall was a born fighter, and delighted in vanquishing his adversary. He was a man of a strong presence ; like the war-horse of Job, his neck was clothed with thunder, and he rejoiced in his strength. Although keen in debate, it was not his custom to fight over trifles—only important issues were worthy of his prowess. The scenes of his greatest triumphs were first the floor of the Secession Synod, and afterwards the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church. After some keen debate, some brilliant wrestling with words which by the agency of the newspapers the whole of Scotland had been made to ring, Marshall might be found the next day at home in his quiet manse garden hoeing up his potatoes. In debate he hit hard ; he spared neither friend nor foe, but he bore no ill-will to his opponent afterwards.

At home in Coupar Angus he was loved by his people, and he gave them his best service, preached to them his best sermons, and was never weary in attention to his flock. His people were robust folks, and they admired their talented minister. They were not given to showing their deepest feelings, but when death cut the bond which united minister and people, then were their hearts softened. Women shed tears and strong men were moved.





*From Photo by*

THOMAS HUNTER,

1849-1904.

[*Porter, Perth.*]

## THOMAS HUNTER

1849–1904

JOURNALIST

THOMAS HUNTER was born on the 8th of June 1849, in a house situated in Holmes Street, Glasgow. His father, who was a paper ruler in business on his own account, was a cousin of Dr. David Livingstone, the famous missionary-explorer. Young Hunter was educated at Free St. Matthew's School in William Street, West. He was early set to work by his father, first as a "feeder," and afterwards he had charge of a paper-ruling machine. He was also, for a short time, employed at the allied trade of bookbinding. His heart, however, was set on being a printer, and accordingly, while yet but a youth, he was apprenticed to a then celebrated man, the late Robert Lyall of Turner's Court, Argyle Street. He was afterwards employed as a compositor on *Murray's Time Tables*, and in the office of the *Glasgow Herald*. During this period of his life he studied English literature, French, and other subjects; also shorthand under Mr. Pettigrew, who was afterwards a magistrate of Glasgow. Subsequently he conducted large stenographic classes in connection with an Institute occupying several flats at the

corner of Argyle and Glassford Streets. He was never content in a subordinate position ; accordingly we find at a later period he became one of the founders of the Glasgow Shorthand Writer's Association, of which the Rev. William Simpson, Alyth (then a student, but now the Parish minister of Bonhill, Dumbartonshire), was President.

Although born amid the smoke of Glasgow, brought up and educated in all the stir and bustle of that great city, he was destined to spend the greater part of his life in one of the most beautiful of the provincial towns of Scotland. In 1872, while yet a young man, he came to Perth to occupy the position of reporter and compositor on the staff of the *Perthshire Courier*. He was, however, but a few months connected with that paper, when the proprietor of the *Perthshire Constitutional*, Mr. James Watson Lyall, offered him the situation of reporter and sub-editor of his paper. A bargain was concluded, which ended for Thomas Hunter, first in a joint-partnership, and afterwards in the sole proprietorship of that well-known county journal. Not only was he an able journalist and an active citizen, he is also the author of that standard work, the *Woods, Forests, and Estates of Perthshire*, and for this book he was awarded the highest honour at the International Forestry Exhibition held in Edinburgh in 1884. That perennial publication, *Hunter's Guide to Perth and Perthshire*, is also his work, and is regarded as a model production of its kind. As a citizen of Perth, Thomas Hunter took an intelligent interest in her affairs. He was for many years an active and en-

thusiastic member of the Masonic Lodge of Scoon and Perth, holding for six years the position of Right Worshipful Master. He was one of the founders of the Perth Swimming Baths, an institution now under the management of the town. For many years he was a member of the session of the Middle Parish Church. Some years before his death he had a severe illness which much impaired his usefulness, and indeed he never recovered his old energy.

Thomas Hunter died on the 24th of February 1904, and was buried in Wellshill Cemetery. His funeral, which was a public one, was attended by a large number of the citizens of Perth, his *confrères* in journalism and his brethren in Freemasonry.

He was a man of good understanding, and he possessed a singularly clear mind. In manners he was frank and affable, being perfectly free from all false pride. His experience of life being large and varied, he was a most entertaining companion. He was a good friend, and spared not himself in serving those whom he loved and respected; on the other hand, he was a doughty opponent, and used all the skill at his command to defeat his foe. Ever ready with his pen, he was equally good as a public speaker, marshalling his facts and deducing his arguments in a cool and collected manner.

The *Woods, Forests, and Estates of Perthshire* is the work by which he will be best remembered in Perthshire. This handsome octavo volume was published in 1883, and met with the complete success it so well deserved. The

preparation for this work involved long journeys throughout the length and breadth of Perthshire, but he was so keen a hunter after facts and illustrations, that he never tired in his labours. His information was invariably sought and found at the fountain head. His book is recognised as the best authority on the subject ; in style it is simple, easy, and perfectly clear. The text is embellished by frequent and appropriate quotations from the poets. The nobility and gentry of Perthshire have found in Thomas Hunter an admiring historian ; lovers of scenery must admire his descriptions of nature and art ; while arboriculturists owe him a debt of gratitude for this excellent work.

We may fitly conclude this short sketch by a few sentences from the *Woods, Forests, and Estates of Perthshire*, where the author refers to Perth :

“For picturesqueness of situation it may safely be said that Perth has no equal in Scotland. Flanked on the north and south by its magnificent Inches—the finest public parks possessed by any town of the same size—it has, on the east and west an extensive range of delightful slopes, while at a little distance it is surrounded by bold and fir-clad hills, which impart to it a truly romantic grandeur as seen from a slight elevation. We have already alluded to the more prominent of the wooded eminences surrounding the ancient and historic city, but there yet remain to be noticed several arboreal features of interest in closer proximity to the town. The Inches, as a matter of course, provide us with the richest material. The South Inch, although the smaller of the two, is much better wooded,

and the trees are of greater size and age. It is believed that trees were first planted here in the early part of last century, and, generally speaking, the original plan has been well adhered to. The trees have been laid out in avenues and groups, and these are so well arranged, and present such an imposing appearance, as to excel anything of the kind in any other town in Scotland. However much the grandeur of the Inch may be enhanced by the surrounding scenery, encircled as it is by the happiest combination of the beauties of nature and art, there can be little doubt that the beauty and arrangement of the trees add materially to the completeness of the picture."

## ROBERT SCOTT FITTIS

1824-1903

HISTORIAN, NOVELIST, ANTIQUARY

FOR more than fifty years the name which stands on the title-page of this essay has been familiar to the reading public of Scotland, and especially to the natives of Perth and Perthshire. Our author gave his long life to letters, and although the fickle goddesses who are supposed to preside over the liberal arts have sometimes proved themselves to be but poor pay-mistresses, he never swerved in his devotion or abated one jot of his ardour. Man, however, does not live by bread alone; indeed, only such as he who has worked and fought and struggled and suffered, do live. His industry, his perseverance, his independence, and his literary skill have been rewarded by the approval of his own conscience and the appreciation of the intelligent of his countrymen. His literary genius will preserve his memory when the names of those of his compeers who merely collected the world's goods and made themselves comfortable have faded into nothingness.

Robert Scott Fittis was born at Perth on the 25th day of November 1824. His birthplace was a house situated



*From Photo by]*

ROBERT S. FITTIS,  
1824-1903.

[*Henderson, Perth.*



on the north side of High Street now numbered 245. His father's name was William Fittis, and that of his mother Margaret Scott. He, however, as boy and young man lived with his mother in a house situated in Bluebell Close. Painted on the lintel of the High Street entrance to this close, there used to be a representation of a bell coloured blue. This close, like many others, was so named after an old-time public-house or inn which flourished there, but whether the ale-house was named from the innocent wild flower, the bluebell, or from the bell which calls us to prayer, we cannot say. We are inclined to think that the comparatively modern artist who had depicted a bell coloured blue was wrong in his idea, and rather that the public-house was named after the Scottish bluebell. Seventy or eighty years ago the Bluebell Close was a very different place compared to what it now is; the area was not so closely built on,—then every back house had its garden or flower-plot, and fruit-trees and shrubs were common. The dwellings in the close were tenanted by a respectable class of church-going citizens. On a Saturday night due preparation would be made for the coming Sabbath,—the close would be swept and cleaned, while inside the houses even greater was the cleaning and tidying up.

Let us suppose it was spring-time. On the early Sabbath morning might have been heard the varied chorus of the feathered tribe, not only jack sparrow, who is always at home in the busy town, but starlings and blackbirds, the former imitating the song of the latter. All nature is

awakening from the sleep of winter; a Sabbath stillness reigns save for the joyous song of the birds. The morning hours are marked by stated peals of the famous bells of St. Johnstoun, and by and by outrings the lively chimes which have called the citizens of Perth to worship for hundreds of years:

M.M. ♩ = 108.

Ding, ding, dong, Christ's-cross our crown.

Then might have been seen the doucely dressed folks wending their way to wait on God. There, amongst them, young Fittis in his blue Kilmarnock bonnet—even then, with look and bearing different from the ordinary youth—giving his arm to his mother, who, dressed in plaid and well-frilled cap, is proud of the budding genius of her son. Together they make for the house of God to attend the ministrations of the Rev. Dr. Thomson, then minister of the Middle Kirk. As St. John's bells ring in imagination in our ears, we cannot help thinking that this last scene of the picture, which is true and not imaginative, betokens that the youth who thus reverences and lovingly attends his mother, cannot go far astray.

After receiving a common elementary education, Fittis was apprenticed in May 1837, when he was only twelve and a half years of age, to Mr. John Flockhart, writer, for the usual period of three years, and with whom he con-

tinued for two years longer as clerk. Previous to this time he had made application to Mr. James Condie, then a well-known writer in Perth, to be taken into his office, when Mr. Condie, who,—as was the fashion of the times, even amongst the educated and well to do,—spoke broad Scotch, remarked, “Laddie, ye’re owre wee ; come back in a year.”

As a schoolboy Fittis had the reputation of being quiet and studious ; but when we consider the limited advantages he had at school, we cannot but recognise that in his youth, and all through his long life, he was his own teacher. His life was a steady process of gathering knowledge, for which he ever had an unquenchable thirst. On leaving the service of his apprentice master, Fittis was employed in the law office of Mr. Archibald Reid, then one of the two Town Clerks of Perth, and from there he was transferred in 1844 to the office of Mr. Robert Macfarlane, solicitor, who, on the sudden demise of Mr. Alexander MacKenzie, Joint Town Clerk, in the spring of 1847, was appointed in his room. The new Town Clerk did not long enjoy the fruits of his office, for he died as suddenly as his predecessor, in the month of May 1848. For the greater part of the two following years Fittis was engaged in the winding up of Mr. Macfarlane’s law business. For upwards of another year he was similarly employed in the settling of the business affairs of Mr. David Clark, writer, who also had died suddenly. This was Fittis’ last connection with law offices.

We now come to review his literary career, which he had pursued for some years in the spare hours of his regular

employment. Literature, which had hitherto been the avocation of his leisure, was now to become the vocation of his life. The seeds of imagination which had first germinated in the dry details of a lawyer's business were now to spring up and flower in the numberless stories and romances which came so freely from his youthful pen. Perhaps the period of his early manhood when he was engaged in romance writing was the happiest of his whole life, for the writer of fiction lives in his own dreamland, and troubles himself as little as possible with the mundane affairs of life. Our author commenced his literary career in August 1841, not long after he had completed his apprenticeship with Mr. Flockhart, who had some literary taste of a singular cast, and was the author of a small volume of *Moral Essays*, which was very popular in its day. About the end of the above month Mr. John Fisher, who carried on a printing business in the Old Ship Close, High Street, started a small weekly paper of twelve pages, under the title of the *Perth Saturday Journal*. It was the first weekly periodical issued in Perth at a penny. The editor was Mr. William Rennie, then a tobacconist, having his place of business in High Street. This venture met with so much success that the twelfth number was issued in an enlarged form, with the new and more ambitious title of *The Perth and Dundee Saturday Journal*. In this form it continued to be issued weekly for some two and a half years. When the change in the name took place, Mr. Rennie went to Edinburgh and found employment on *Hogg's Instructor*. The editorship was then assumed by Mr. James Davidson, a

well-known local reporter ; but he soon resigned the office in favour of another and better known local reporter, Thomas Hay Marshall, afterwards the author of *The History of Perth*. Throughout all the years of the existence of this journal, Fittis was a constant contributor, his connection having commenced with the second number, when he made his début with the first of a short series of "Legends of Perth," written over the letters F. R., being his own initials reversed.

It is interesting to mention that amongst the contributors to this Perth Weekly were George C. Hutton, a young man and a native of Perth, then studying for the ministry, who utilised his leisure in writing poems and stories, and who is now better known as Principal Hutton of the U.F. Church, and the dominant leader of a politico-ecclesiastical party ; and the late Mr. Thomas Soutar, solicitor in Crieff, who, although all his life engrossed in professional business, never lost his early love of literature.

Thinking there was ample room for another penny weekly in Perth, Mr. William Bayne, printer, also hailing from the Old Ship Close, started *The Dundee, Perth, and Arbroath Weekly Magazine* on the 7th of April 1843. The editor of this venture was Mr. David Craigie, one of the teachers in the seminaries. At the repeated solicitation of the printer, Fittis contributed several tales and sketches. *The Magazine*, weakly from its birth, ceased with the 25th number.

In the beginning of the year 1844 there appeared in the *Journal* the first instalment of Fittis' longest serial, *The Mosstrooper*, which immediately became popular with the

readers, and went on for some months, until the publisher's difficulties caused the stoppage of the *Journal* altogether, much to the general regret. Mr. Bayne at once threw himself into the breach by issuing *The Perth and Dundee Journal*. In this new venture *The Mosstrooper* was continued for some time, and would have been concluded in it but for an unfortunate disagreement with the printer. This circumstance led to an arrangement with Fisher for a new periodical, which was published under the title of *Tales of Scotland, Original and Select*. New Year's Day of 1845 saw the issue of the first number, with a supplement containing the conclusion of *The Mosstrooper*. Fittis was the sole editor and chief contributor. Amongst the other writers to this magazine were George Hay (of the town steelyard), James Davidson, and Thomas Hay Marshall (journalists); while quite a number of songs and poems are from the hand of Charles Spence, and some of James Stewart's sketches of Scottish character grace its pages, although the poet was dead by this time. The young editor was untiring in his labours, and many of the pieces which appeared under different initials were from his own pen. The work was completed in four half-yearly volumes. It proved an immense success. The first twelve numbers of the first volume were reprinted three times, so large was the demand. Fisher pushed the sale in all directions. He engaged booksellers in Edinburgh, London, Dundee, Aberdeen, and Glasgow, and sold his *Tales* in large quantities. The keeping up of the stories week after week was a great effort, but Fittis struggled manfully

through the four volumes, doing the greater part of the work himself.

In 1847 the *Scottish Miscellany* was started, which after a brief interval was succeeded by a second series of *Tales of Scotland*, the greater number of the tales being contributed by our editor. In 1851 he edited a short series under the title of *Miscellany of Scottish Tradition*. In 1852 he rewrote *The Mosstrooper*, and as it was still much in demand he issued it in numbers, forming a volume, under the title of *The Mosstrooper; and Tales and Traditions of Scotland*, the tales being all from his own pen. By the year 1853, Fittis had given up his employment as a lawyer's clerk and connected himself with the *Perthshire Courier*, which at this time had been acquired by James Dewar from the Morisons, where he remained for eight years.

During the time Fittis was engaged on the staff of the *Courier* he undertook a labour of love, in which he was assisted by James Davidson, which testifies to his appreciation of true poetry and the memory of a brother writer. James Stewart, a native of Perth, who followed the occupation of a shoemaker at Dunkeld, was a Scottish poet whose merit has been somewhat obscured. He died in 1843 at Perth, and was buried in the Greyfriars' burial-ground, where no stone then marked his last resting-place. He was a contributor to Fisher's *Perth Saturday Journal* in 1841, when Fittis must have made his acquaintance. It occurred to Davidson and our author that Stewart's poems might be collected and published in a memorial volume, the profits accruing from which might

be devoted to placing a monument over the grave of the poet. This work was carefully done by Fittis and his friend, and *Sketches of Scottish Character, and other Poems*, by the late James Stewart, with a memoir of the author, was published at the *Courier* office in 1857 by subscription, and a stone now marks the grave of a true poet. This little volume of 300 8vo pages is dedicated to William Stirling of Keir, afterwards better known as Sir William Stirling Maxwell, long the Member of Parliament for Perthshire. The book could have done as well, however, without any Dedication, for all the support it received from Sir William, as he only subscribed for two copies, and for which he paid five shillings. This volume is now out of print, but those who are fortunate in having copies, feel that this posthumous collection of the poet's writings is his best memorial. Fittis disclaims writing the memoir which is prefixed to the poems, and indeed it is not quite in his style.

Our author soon gave up his employment in the *Courier* office; he was not the sort of man to be long tied down to routine work. His life was an industrious one in many departments of literature, in romance, tradition, history, and antiquity. In 1864 his story, "The Secret Witness," was published in the *People's Journal*, and his last contribution to that paper was a series of articles on "Haunted Houses in Perth." In 1865 his novel, *Gilderoy*, was published in the *Scottish Journal*, Glasgow, and was issued, the following year, by Routledge in the Railway Library. Other stories of his appeared in the Glasgow *Penny Post*, the Edinburgh

*North Briton*, the *North Berwick Advertiser*, etc. In 1873 he commenced to write for the *Perthshire Constitutional* two columns weekly, under the general title of "The Antiquarian Repository," which he continued for seven years, until he had written 144 articles. These were published in book form at the end of every year under the following titles: *Illustrations of the History and Antiquities of Perthshire* (Perth, 1874); *The Perthshire Antiquarian Miscellany* (Perth, 1875); *Historical and Traditional Gleanings concerning Perthshire* (Perth, 1876); *Chronicles of Perthshire* (Perth, 1877); *Sketches of the Olden Time in Perthshire* (Perth, 1878); *A Book of Perthshire Memorabilia* (Perth, 1879); and *Recreations of an Antiquary in Perthshire History and Genealogy* (Perth, 1881).

The amount of labour and research involved in preparing these seven volumes, published in almost seven successive years, is such that they could only have been produced by one whose whole mind is steeped in antiquarian lore. These volumes may be well termed an antiquarian repository; they are now very scarce, and at book sales have frequently realised from 15s. to £1 per volume. Great as is the labour involved in producing these seven books, they are the outcome, to some extent, of the service of our writer to the great work which he published in 1885, *The Ecclesiastical Annals of Perth to the Period of the Reformation*, which was the intermittent labour of many previous years, when he was gleaning facts from every available source within his reach. Of this work more anon.

The other publications which Fittis issued in book form were : *The Heroines of Scotland*, 1889 ; *Scottish Sports and Pastimes*, 1891 ; *Curious Episodes in Scottish History*, 1895 ; and *Romantic Narratives from Scottish History and Tradition*, 1903. His miscellaneous contributions during the past years have been : "Eccentric Characters in Perth and Perthshire," "Tales of Perth," "Chronicles of the Tolbooth of Perth," "The Resurrectionists of Perth," "The Old Taverns of Perth," and "The Witches and Warlocks of Perth," all of which appeared in local newspapers. He has also written a great variety of articles to various London periodicals. Besides doing all this work he had been extensively employed in making genealogical researches in the Registers of Perthshire and Stirlingshire. In this last capacity he had several times been cited as a witness before the Law Courts in London and Edinburgh.

Fittis was all his life a book collector ; but he was a lover of books as well, and his extensive collection of books has, by the enlightened liberality of Dr. Andrew Carnegie, been presented to the Sandeman Public Library of Perth. We are not aware of Fittis having ever invaded the realm of poetry, but as an editor he has often had occasion to polish the verses of others. Few men, however, have had a keener appreciation of poetry, and his library contained a large number of the best editions of Scottish poetry, song, and ballad literature. Book hunting was the sole luxury of his life, and he was the happy possessor of many rare and valuable works now impossible to procure. In historical

works he had also a fine collection of standard authorities, including many of the expensive volumes of the various Scottish Historical Clubs and Societies. He guarded his library with jealous care, and during his lifetime few, even of his intimates, were permitted to explore its treasures.

He was an admirer of all that is good and true in Scottish literature ; a despiser of all that is mean and base. Whether we consider him as a historian, a novelist, or an antiquary, we have good reason to be proud of the only literary son of Perth who made his living by literature alone. To strangers he was shy and retiring, but amongst his intimates he was genial and mellow, unless when he was roused to defend what he considered to be the right ; then he spared neither friend nor foe. He was an ardent and patriotic Scotsman. In politics he was a keen Conservative. He was no sycophant ; never rich, yet perfectly independent. He never could descend to specious arguments ; had he been more plausible in his temperament, life might have been easier for himself. Even when well advanced in years he was dignified in his bearing ; to almost the end of his life his natural force was not much abated, and his picturesque figure and easy gait was well known on the streets of his native city. He was of medium height, well built, and for an old man very active. His complexion was pale and sallow ; his features were good and expressive ; his eyes were brown, and remarkable for their brightness lighting up his whole face. In dress he usually wore a long surtout coat of grey cloth, his head being covered by a corduroy peaked cap. He usually wore

a white shirt ; but, unlike the ordinary individual, towards the end of his life he discarded the wearing of tie or cravat. He followed no fashion, but dressed to please himself, or rather he used clothes to keep him warm in winter and cool in summer. Although clean shaven he was not professional-looking ; no one could guess his business from his appearance. There was nothing *outré* about him, and not much that was odd ; he was like no other, only himself, Robert Scott Fittis. *The Ecclesiastical Annals of Perth to the Period of the Reformation* was published in 1885 by Samuel Cowan & Co., Perth. The name of James Gemmell, Edinburgh, also appears on the title-page as joint publisher. The book was printed at Perth, and is well got up, the size being octavo, and extending to 349 pages. Following the example of Henry Adamson and James Cant, the author has dedicated his work to the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of Perth. After the Dedication follows a Table of Contents, showing the work to be divided into two books : the first one treating of the general history of the subject, and the second devoted to giving an account of the Religious Houses, Chapels, and Altars. The illustrations are seven in number, and call for no special remark. They are without exception woodcuts, but appropriate to the text and illustrative of the subject. The Historian's Preface is tasteful and modest. The book concludes with an Appendix and general Index.

Mr. Fittis' style is easy and natural, and from beginning to end the book reads well. To show how well it is written we cannot do better than reproduce the following passage :

"The storm of the Reformation, suddenly excited, burst on Perth with the destructive violence of the simoom ; every religious edifice being demolished save the chapel of Our Lady and the Church of St. John. The populace contented themselves with ' purging ' the venerable church ; the images of saints being thrown down and broken to pieces ; the altars over-turned, and their rich furnishings and ornaments becoming spoil along with the plunder of the monasteries ; and a few days sufficed to reduce Perth to comparative meanness of appearance. She was deprived of much of what entitled her to the proud name of the Fair City ; and she could only continue to claim it, not from her own architectural elegance, but from the unrivalled beauty of her situation on the banks of the Tay, surrounded by an amphitheatre of hills " (p. 104).

This is a fair specimen of our author. His sentences are long enough, but they are not involved. About claiming the title of " Fair City," we are not aware that the citizens of that day did claim it ; we rather think they had a poor appreciation of natural beauty then, and did not love or value the beautiful. That is to say, the masses had no eye for beauty in landscape. Of course, there have always been exceptions,—poets like Adamson and dreamers like our good Fittis himself, who would be considered by the average citizen somewhat impractical, in fact a little " off." Courage ! my idealist, the world is surely coming to see with your eyes.

Our author gives us a great deal more than he stipulates in his title. There he states that he will tell us the story up to the period of the Reformation ; but he does better than he says,

for he brings down his story to a much later date. On page 125 we read : "Shortly before the granting of this Charter,<sup>1</sup> the western portion or transept of St. John's Church had been partitioned off as a separate place of worship, and was known as the Little Kirk, and the New Kirk." The word *transept* here must be a misprint for *nave*. We will conclude this review by a quotation, in which the author will speak for himself in his kindest vein ; but first we would say that there is here far more to praise than to blame : the book is well put together, comprehensive and authentic :

*Priory and Hospital of St. Leonard*

"Perhaps the busiest sight in the environs of the Fair City is the northward view of the approach to the General Station from the railway bridge leading to the New Town and Craigie. Standing on that elevation, you behold a network of rails stretching below like a monstrous spider's web in course of formation, amongst which detached engines, puffing and snorting, rush to and fro, and trains arrive and depart, heralding their movements with shrieks, fell and ear-splitting as those of demons just emerged from the bowels of the earth to plague upper air, whilst clouds of smoke and steam obscure the natural charms of the surrounding scenery. But watch a lucid moment : look up from the nether region of drivers and stokers, and guards, pointsmen, signalmen, and nondescript supernumeraries, and the eye meets an amphitheatre of hills near and afar, and sweeps on at a glance to the wavy blue line of the Grampians. To the right, the orient prospect is filled by the broad breast of Kinnoull,

<sup>1</sup> Charter by Queen Ann, Consort of King James vi.

variegated with green woods and embowered mansions; southwards, and Moredun, ‘the glory of Scotland,’ rises in its verdant slope, foliage-crowned: and shutting in the south and west are the Cloven Crags and Craigie Hills. Forty years have not elapsed since all that nether region of rails and steam was covered with ‘bonny corn-rigs and rigs o’ barley,’ mellowing in the sunshine, where the craik’s call in the hushed gloaming was the wonder and the mystery of the wandering schoolboy, and whence laverocks fluttered up from among the ‘dewy weet’ to salute the morning beam. Remembering well the former aspects of the locality, we can well understand how it was chosen as the seat of a little sisterhood of nuns, from whose cloister it acquired the name by which it has ever since been distinguished. The olden religious houses were usually erected in picturesque situations, which diligent culture and care improved; and so when a Priory of Cistercian Nuns was established on the Leonard Lands, there was a manifest adaptability in the site for this pious purpose.”

There is a passage for you; it is a little prose poem. Who will say that our Fittis is not a poet, after such a poetic quotation?

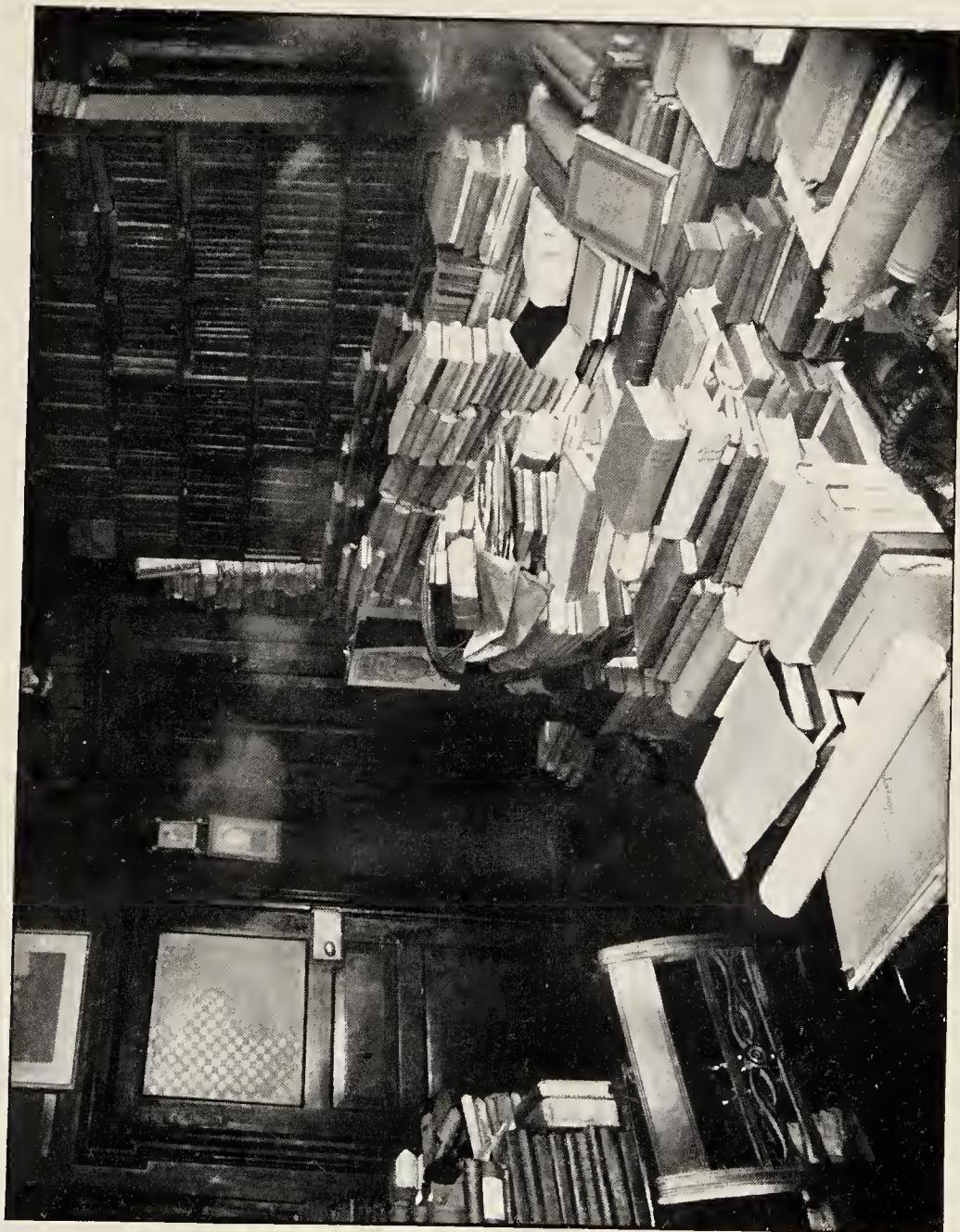
This aged man of letters died at Perth, where he had lived his long life, on the 10th October 1903, and was buried in Wellshill Cemetery. Amongst those who attended his funeral were Lord Provost Love, Sir Robert Pullar, many members of the learned professions, and others his friends and admirers. The Rev. J. M’Glashan Scott, the minister of the Middle Parish Church, conducted religious services in the house.

In his study, surrounded by his silent friends, the books he loved so well, and from whom he was only parted by death, was placed on trestles the coffin containing the mortal remains of the lately living tenant. The sun shone and the traffic of the city went on as usual, while sorrow filled the hearts of the mourners. Many looked on with reverence as the solemn procession passed up the High Street. On entering the gates of the cemetery the sky became overcast, and for a while the sun was hid by heavy clouds. A storm of wind and rain raged while the coffin was being lowered, and as the minister engaged in prayer, "Earth to earth, and dust to dust," the rain poured on the assembled mourners. Thus the mortal remains of a brave spirit were laid to rest. Yet hardly had the sexton finished his labour, when the sun shone through the clouds on the new made grave.

[*Mervier, Perth.*

FITTI'S' LIBRARY AND STUDY.

*From Photo by*





## COLIN A. HUNT

1825-1895

EDITOR OF THE "HAMMERMEN Book," 1879

TOWARDS the end of the first quarter of last century there resided in Bridgend of Perth a shoemaker named Thomas Hunt, whose ancestors were of English extraction. He was a man of considerable mental power, a philosophic workman, whose lifelong hobby was algebra, and who spent his leisure, and possibly many of the hours which should have been devoted to his business, in the solution of abstruse algebraic problems. He was then a young man, but he was married, and we may be sure that hope sprung eternal in the breasts of both he and his wife. To this pair were born eight sons, and to the upbringing and education of their large family, in a time of general poverty and distress, all their energies were devoted. Thomas Hunt lived to a good old age (78), and had the satisfaction of seeing his sons comfortably established and even fairly prosperous in life. The eldest son, Colin Anderson Hunt (the subject proper of this paper), was born in January 1825 at Bridgend, in the parish of Kinnoull, and was a well-known, useful, and much-respected citizen of Perth. The second son, now the Rev. John Hunt, D.D., vicar of Otford, Kent, after passing through the

University of St. Andrews, joined the Church of England, and for nearly thirty years has held his present preferment. He has been a prolific writer on theological and ecclesiastical subjects, his most important works being a *History of Religious Thought in England*, a *History of Pantheism*, and *Contemporary Essays in Theology*.

Colin A. Hunt received an elementary education at a school situated in the Isla Road, and afterwards at Mr. Greig's Academy in Kinnoull Street, where he distinguished himself by an uncommon efficiency in mental arithmetic. Although his school days were now done, he never considered his education finished, and he continued his training by teaching himself. In this way he acquired a working knowledge of the French and Latin languages, which proved of much service to him in after years. He was of a studious and retiring disposition, reading and mentally digesting every scrap of literature which came in his way. As a young lad he was apprenticed to a firm of drapers in Perth named Clark & Morton, the predecessors of Mr. William Brydson, St. John Street, and there he spent some years. After acquiring further experience in Cupar-Fife and Paisley, he in 1852 began business on his own account as a clothier in a shop in George Street, where he carried on a large and successful trade for the greater part of his life, with the assistance of three of his brothers. Some years later, in conjunction with two other brothers, he established the firm of Hunt Brothers, Dundee, and this business he also carried on until he retired.

He was a member of the Wilson Church (the mother-

church of the secession in Perth), and in its work he took a deep interest. He was a keen student of Church history, an eager controversialist, and a frequent newspaper correspondent. Amongst his historical contributions may be mentioned a *History of the Wilson Church*, and *Reminiscences of the Secession in Perth*. In municipal affairs he took little interest, although he was induced to serve for one term of three years as a member of the Town Council. In educational matters, however, he took a deep interest, and he was elected a member of the School Board of Perth on four successive occasions.

In 1853 he married Margaret, daughter of John Middlemas, cartwright in Perth, and was soon after admitted a member of the Incorporation of Hammermen, as the son-in-law of a member. His influence was soon felt in the Incorporation, and in 1880 he was elected to the office of Deacon. For several years he directed the affairs of that body with so much acceptance, that on his retirement from office he was presented with a service of plate bearing the arms of the Incorporation and a suitable inscription. During his term of office as Deacon he began to study the records of this old trade organisation, and the result of his labours we have in the *Hammermen Book*, a most valuable addition to the history of Perth, and an interesting account of the customs and usages of the craftsmen. This signal contribution to local history was published in 1889. In the same year he retired from business and left Perth to settle at Egremont, Cheshire, where he resided for several years. During his

annual summer excursion to Scotland he died suddenly at Largo in July 1895, and was buried at Wellshill Cemetery, Perth, beside his wife, who had predeceased him. He was survived by two sons, both distinguished members of the medical profession in England, and one daughter.

An incident in the life of Colin A. Hunt's father-in-law casts a light on the bygone powers of the trade guilds. In the minutes of the Hammermen Incorporation for the 6th September 1808, it is recorded that the Deacon and Boxmaster were appointed to "prosecute John Middlemas, a stranger, for encroaching on their privileges." On the 29th September the Deacon produced a letter from John Middlemas, "cart and plowmaker," acknowledging his error in encroaching on the trades' privileges, and applying to be entered a freeman. He was requested to make an "essay" to show his skill and workmanship. This specimen of his skill was an iron hoop, with which the "essay masters" were well pleased, and he was accordingly admitted a freeman of the craft on payment of £25 sterling of freedom money, and the usual small dues. In the history of his own family, Colin A. Hunt could have found several instances of the powers of the Incorporations; indeed the fact that he was born in Bridgend, which was out-with the burgh, was one of them.

Thomas Hunt, the first of the family in this part of the country, was the sixth son and ninth child of John Hunt of Brayesworth, Suffolk, and was born there in April 1734. That his culture and education were above the average of his time, is evident from the MSS. and commonplace books which

are now in the possession of his direct representative, Thomas Hunt, M.D. After serving some time in the 31st Regiment of Foot, and having married a daughter of James MacLauchlan, hatmaker in Dunfermline, he left the service, acquired the trade of hatmaking (presumably from his father-in-law), and settled for a time in Cupar. He maintained that having served his Majesty he was a King's Freeman, with the right to settle in business in any burgh, without the consent of any trades guild. The Cupar hatmakers were, however, too strong for him, and he had to move on. He then came to Perth, where he seems to have been allowed to settle peacefully, and where he carried on his hatmaking business till his death in 1802.

His eldest son, James, was born in Edinburgh Castle in April 1762. His father apprenticed him to the shoemaking trade, and his indentures were registered in the Guildry Book of Perth in July 1776. He finished his apprenticeship, but never became a Freeman of the Craft, nor followed the occupation. He became a candlemaker instead, in association with his brother-in-law, Oswald Lawson. It may be that he also claimed to be a King's Freeman, having been born in the service. At anyrate, we find that in 1794 he was a member of the committee of the "Society of King's Freemen of Perth," an association founded by his father and some other old service men in 1788, for the protection of their mutual interests. James Hunt died in 1795, aged only thirty-three years, leaving a widow and young family but scantily provided for.

His eldest son, Thomas Hunt, was born at Perth in June 1789, and was apprenticed by his uncle to shoemaking, as his father had been, his indentures being registered in the Guildry Book in March 1803. He duly served his apprenticeship, but, like his father, he never became a Freeman of the Craft, and so he could not enter on business within the burgh. The reason in his case was probably want of funds. He settled, therefore, at Bridgend, and there his family of eight sons were born and reared.

*The Perth Hammermen Book*, from 1518 to 1568, with an introductory sketch by Colin A. Hunt, was published in 1889. This interesting record of an ancient trade incorporation was appropriately printed and published at Perth by James H. Jackson, the successor of the Morisons, a member of the Craft of Hammermen, and an ex-Deacon. It is a handsome volume in large quarto, and reflects the greatest credit on all concerned in its production. There are seven other trade incorporations in Perth besides the Guildry Incorporation or Merchant Guild, but only in this instance has any considerable portion of their records been published. There is without doubt equally interesting matter hid away in the old minutes and accounts of the other incorporations, which only await such another accomplished, careful, and judicious editor as Colin A. Hunt. The Hammermen Incorporation has been fortunate in its editor, for such a man is not to be found every day. Few writers have the requisite ability for this sort of work, and those who have are often so occupied with other and more lucrative work, that they have no time left

for the deciphering and editing of ancient records, the calligraphy of which is so different from that of our own time.

The editor's introductory sketch extends to 122 pages, in which limit he has given us a most interesting account of the early history of the Hammermen Craftsmen as workmen and citizens. The writer has infused his strong mental personality into every page of his work. His meaning is always clear, and his thoughts are well expressed. We may not agree with his deductions, but his vigour compels admiration.

He accepts without question, and we are sure without examination, the unsubstantial tradition that Perth was founded by the Romans; but this is by the way, as his sketch does not really deal with the period of the Roman occupation of Britain. In such a well-written sketch it is difficult to select a passage for quotation. Perhaps the following scathing denunciation of Provost Threipland will give the reader a good idea of the style of this writer:

"After the Restoration [of the Stuarts to the throne] the citizens of Perth had to appear as loyal supporters of the King's Government. There was no help for them. The Commonwealth, which had for a few years given them prosperity, and promised to give them more, had passed away. Some of the citizens who had been supporters of the Commonwealth so long as they could make place and power out of it, became ardent supporters of the restored Government. This is said to have been markedly the case with Patrick Threipland, a merchant in the High Street, and tacksman of the salmon fishings of the town. He was a

Bailie in 1658, Provost in 1664, a Knight in 1674, and a Baronet in 1688. The honours from the crown were received for services rendered in the interests of despotism. The burgesses, who in previous years had made sacrifices for religion and liberty, must have felt bitterly their condition under a Government that rejected the principles for which they had striven; and, besides, they had to endure the spirit of tyranny that animated the municipal rulers.

"Threipland's rule as provost was imperious and inquisitorial, little else than a reign of terror. In 1666, at a meeting of the Town Council, Threipland complained that he had been subjected to the scolding tongue of Euphan Fleming, who had disapproved of his doings, and had let him know her mind about him. The Council ordered Euphan, for her offence, to be imprisoned during the Provost's pleasure, and to pay a fine of 500 merks. Euphan's honest indignation at the local tyrant cost herself and her husband dear. She was no 'gangrel' woman, but the wife of a Dean of Guild; and he, as he well might, was wroth at the sentence passed upon his wife. When the officers went to take her to prison he deforced them from his house, and drew a sword in her defence. The defence of his wife only increased the Dean's troubles, for an additional fine was imposed on him, and both he and his wife were imprisoned."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Introductory sketch to *Hammermen Book*, p. lxxviii.





*From Photo Lr]*

REV. ROBERT MILNE, D.D.,  
1832-1895

[Henderson, Perth.]

# THE REV. ROBERT MILNE, A.M., D.D.

1832-1895

LOCAL HISTORIAN

FORFARSHIRE may well be proud of such a man as Robert Milne, who, like many other faithful and eminent ministers of the Scottish Church, was a son of the soil. His father, William Milne, was grieve on a farm near Tannadice in 1832, when the future minister was born. Young Robert received the rudiments of his education at the village school of the place of his nativity. He afterwards attended the Academy of Montrose, and from thence he migrated to Aberdeen, where he became a pupil at the Grammar School. He was successful in gaining a valuable bursary at Aberdeen, and he now decided to study for the ministry. He was entered a student at Aberdeen University, where he greatly distinguished himself, graduating in 1852. He then entered on a four year's course of divinity at St. Andrews, where he was equally successful. In 1856 he finished his University career as premier prizeman, and the same year he was licensed by the Presbytery of Forfar. His first charge was the mission station of Strathkinness,<sup>1</sup> near St.

<sup>1</sup> When Robert Milne laboured in Strathkinness the services were held in the school, as the present church was not then built. His memory is still held in grateful remembrance in the district.

Andrews, where he laboured for a short time, when he was presented by the Town Council of Perth to the West Kirk Parish, and was ordained on the 5th of March 1857. At once he took a high place amongst his brother ministers of the city, and won the affection of his congregation. His work in Perth was remarkably successful, and he was one of the best beloved of her clergy. Throughout all his life “he was a scholar, a ripe and good one.” He was one of the kindest and most gentle of men—one who faithfully served his Great Master, and in serving Him grew like Him. Intellectually and morally he was a man of great strength. In personal appearance he was moderately tall and well proportioned; careful in his dress, as became his position; grave and composed in his manner; his sense of humour was keen, and a kindly smile was ever ready to mantle his grave features upon occasion. Happy the church that has such a one for her pastor! fortunate the city that has such pastors among her clergy!

While maintaining his own views he was able to live at peace with all denominations, and to work together with them for that which was for the good of the whole community. The good example he left in his life, and the gentle kindness he showed to all with whom he came in contact, surely made for righteousness in Perth. He was a conscientious minister of the Gospel, his first care being always for his work. The historical works which bear his name were the labours of his leisure. What he has done in the elucidation of the local history of Perth has been so well performed, that it is a matter of great regret he was not spared to do more.

In 1882, Robert Milne received the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from his *alma mater*, the University of St. Andrews. At this time, also, the members of his congregation presented him with gifts expressive of the delight they felt in the honour he had received, and the elders presented him with an illuminated address on the completion of the twenty-fifth year of his ministry.

In 1891, Dr. Milne published, at the request of the trustees, *The Rental Books of King James vi.'s Hospital, Perth*, with a short history of the institution, and Notes, which was well received. In 1893 appeared *The Blackfriars of Perth, The Chartulary and Papers of their House*, with an Introduction. This book is a magnificent volume, extending to 334 pages large quarto. The charters are carefully transcribed, and lithographs of many of the writings are given. These books are very valuable, and especially so for students of local and general history.

Dr. Milne had made considerable progress with a similar volume for the Carthusians of Perth, but before he could finish it he received that summons which we must all obey. He died on the 2nd of May 1895, lamented by the whole community of Perth. His mortal part lies buried in the beautiful cemetery of Kirriemuir. There by his side rests Jane Ramsay, his loving wife, who survived him but a few years.

“HE GIVETH HIS BELOVED SLEEP.”

The concluding paragraph of the introduction to *The Blackfriars*, which we reproduce, shows Dr. Milne at his best—

simple, yet rich and clear in style, broad-minded and charitable in judgment :

“At the Reformation we see the friars neither at their best nor at their worst. On the one hand they had departed from their early simplicity, on the other they had been making some attempt to return and do the first works. All the while they minded—found it difficult to avoid—earthly things. Their documents and papers, indeed, both earlier and later, refer chiefly to matters of a somewhat mean and sordid character—transactions in property, or strivings with debtors and deceitful spoilers. But let it be allowed that they had also regard of what was more excellent. Three hundred years hence, would it be quite fair to estimate the work and aims of Protestant ecclesiastics by mere Presbytery records, or the like, which often contain but too copious details of the keenness with which little passing and personal questions were agitated, of processes threatened or instituted with reference to glebes, manses, or garden walls? Nay, we are fain to believe that the better part of our history is that which remains, and shall remain, unchronicled and unrelated, written only in the beneficial impression which, in spite of our defects, we trust God may grant us to make on the hearts and lives of those around us. With like judgment let those who have gone before be judged. Let it be held—it is the more Christian creed—that the good, rather than the evil, men do lives after them : and, so believing, let us have a kindly thought to think of these ‘preachers’ of a former age, not deeming them sinners above all others because of what eventually befell them, but owning that our life to-day is, on the whole, richer and better for the work they wrought and the things they ministered.”





*From Photo by]*

[*The Art Photo Co., Perth.*

REV. CANON FARQUHAR,  
ST. NINIAN'S CATHEDRAL.

THE REV. GEO. T. S. FARQUHAR, M.A.(OXON.)  
HISTORIAN

THE REV. GEO. T. S. FARQUHAR, better known as Canon Farquhar, the writer of *The Episcopal History of Perth*, is the son of the late Rev. W. Taylor, M.A., sometime incumbent of the Episcopal Church of St. John's in Forfar, who on his marriage with Miss Farquhar, the proprietrix of the estate of Pitscandly, Forfarshire, assumed her name. There were six children born of this marriage, of whom the subject of this sketch is the third. Young George Farquhar received the rudiments of his education at a preparatory school in Edinburgh. In 1868 he was entered a scholar at Trinity College, Glenalmond, that famous institution which has done so much for the Episcopalians of Scotland. From his earliest years he had been a diligent student, and it goes without saying that he studied hard at Glenalmond, for in 1875, the last year of his residence there, he carried off the Buccleuch gold medal for Classics. On leaving the banks of the Almond he went to Oxford, where he matriculated at Keble College. In 1877, after taking the prize for the year in his college for Classics, and a second-class in Classical Honour Moderations, his health quite broke down, and he was obliged not only to give up the honour course in the University, but to relinquish for a time his favourite studies.

By the year 1882 he had so far recovered as to be able to take both his B.A. and M.A. degrees. On St. Barnabas' Day (11th June) of the same year he was ordained a deacon of the Episcopal Church by the late Bishop Wordsworth of St. Andrews, and licensed as curate to his father's old church in Forfar. At this time the Rev. V. L. Rorison, M.A. (also an old Glenalmond boy), now Dean of St. Andrews and D.D. of Aberdeen University, was Incumbent of this church.

For a year and a half Mr. Farquhar held this position, when he accepted the Curacy of the church of St. Mary Magdalene of Dundee, where he got some insight in work amongst the poorer classes in a large city. While in Dundee he was ordained Priest by Dr. Jermyn, the Bishop of Brechin, on St. Thomas' Day 1882. The following year, at the joint invitation of the Bishop of St. Andrews and the Very Rev. Provost Burton, he came to Perth as chaplain in St. Ninian's Cathedral and Supernumerary of the Diocese. In 1885 the genial Provost Burton died, and was succeeded by the Very Rev. V. L. Rorison, with whom our author had served in his first curacy. At this time also, on the resignation of the Rev. Canon Mackey, M.A., he was appointed Precentor of the Cathedral. In 1895 he was appointed Diocesan Inspector of Schools by the bishop, Dr. Wilkinson. This office he held for five years, when he resigned it on being elected Clerk by the Synod of the Diocese. At the present time, besides holding the offices mentioned, Canon Farquhar is a member of the Laity Commission, which is at present at work; a member of the Church's Board of

Education, and one of the Examiners for the Sunday School prizes given by the Board. Since coming to Perth the Canon has had the happiness of seeing the Cathedral congregation quadrupled in numbers, and the Cathedral buildings extended at a cost of £24,000, under two successive bishops and three successive provosts.

Amid his varied ecclesiastical work, Canon Farquhar has found time to write and publish a book of *Sonnets* (Perth : Cowan & Co., 1890); *Our Ancient Scottish Cathedrals* (Perth : Macgregor, 1897); *Fidelis, an Allegory* (Edinburgh : St. Giles Co., 1897); *The Story of St. Ninian's Cathedral* (Edinburgh : St. Giles Co., 1901); and the work with which we are more immediately interested, *The Episcopal History of Perth* (Perth : Jackson, 1894), a small octavo volume of 436 pages.

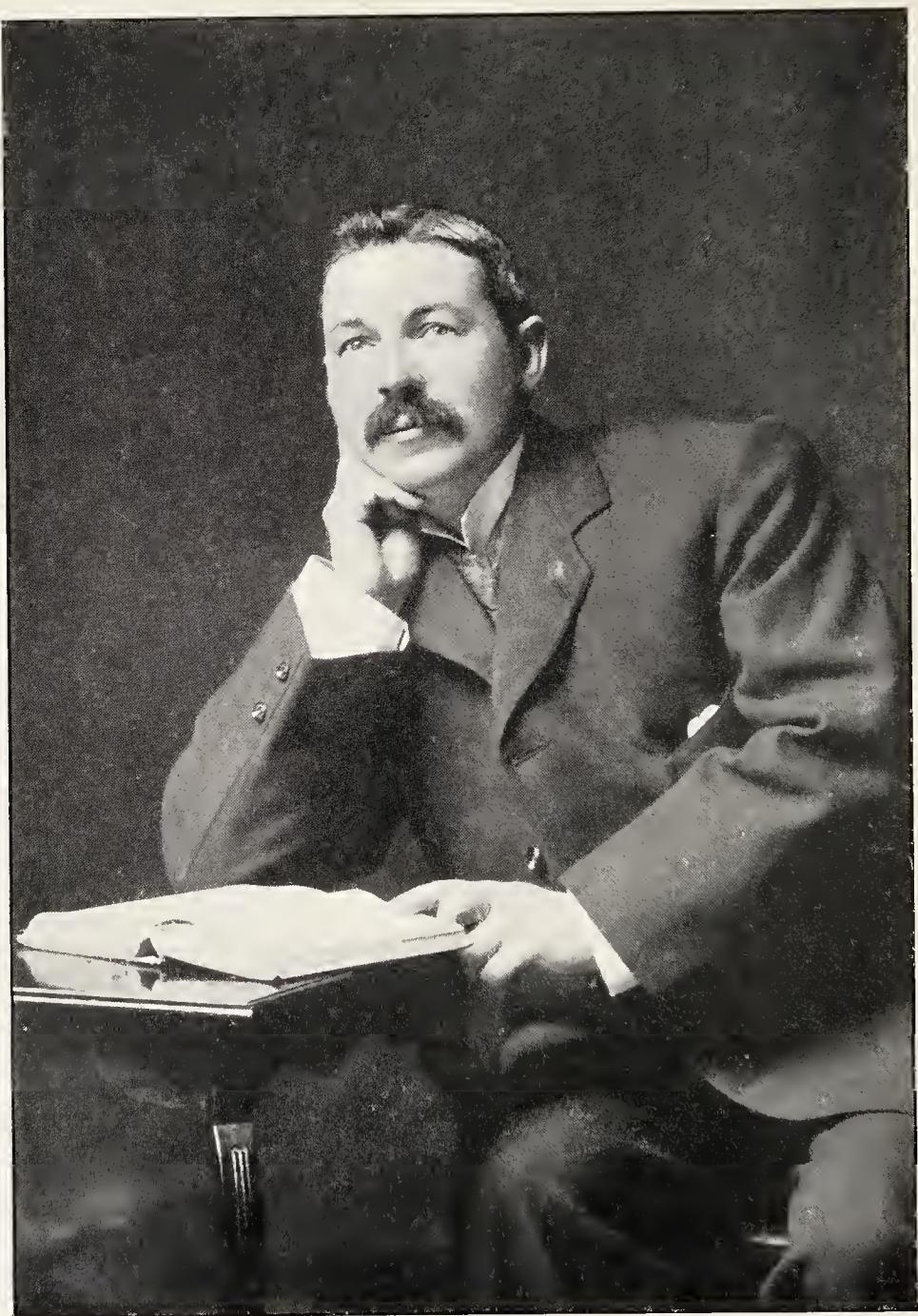
Canon Farquhar is a cultured and gifted writer, but he is, notwithstanding, a partisan. With him there is only one Church—the Episcopal, and his history is written from that standpoint. He glories in the principle of Episcopacy, as he frankly tells us. We may not agree with all he has written, but we must admit that from his point of view he pleads well. He has chosen to begin his history at the period of the Revolution, but that date is not the genesis of Protestant Episcopacy in Scotland. The sufferings of the Covenanters from the time of the restoration of the Stuarts until the accession of William and Mary, when the Episcopal ritual and form of Church government were being forced on an unwilling people, were far greater than those endured by the ousted Episcopalianists. We are quite aware that two blacks do not make one white, and

one oppression does not justify another. *The History of Episcopacy in Perth* is well told ; the style is reverent and dignified throughout. The triumphant emergence of a persecuted Church from oppression to power, as told by Canon Farquhar, reads like a fairy tale.

Writing of the imprisonment of the Episcopalian Jacobites, on page 174, Canon Farquhar professes to quote from Penny ; but the quotation is not quite the same as given in *The Traditions of Perth*. The jail described by Penny was not close to St. John's Church. It was, in fact, the building known as St. Mary's Chapel at the foot of High Street. The present Municipal Buildings are built on part of the site of the old chapel. In Chapter XXV., under the title of "How the land lay desolate," he writes :

"After Primus Skinner had gathered together the fragments of the Church that remained after the Repeal of the Penal Laws, these remnants were found to be afflicted with extreme poverty and lack of corporate organisation. Each congregation aimed at simply struggling along for itself. They hailed the permission to exist, which they had now gained, as a great gift, and an aggressive mission policy did not come within the range of their practical politics. And it is a curious fact that not the Scottish Church alone was invaded at this epoch by this passive spirit. The Church of England, too, shared in it, and had to be roused by the Oxford movement of 1833 ; the Scottish Establishment shared in it until it was roused by the Secession of the Free Kirk in 1843 ; and the State itself shared in it, and had to be roused by the Reform Bill of 1832."





*From Photo by*

MR. PETER BAXTER.

[*The Photo Art Co., Perth.*

## PETER BAXTER

### JOURNALIST

PETER BAXTER was born in Perth on the 17th of September 1860. Both his parents were natives of the county, his father, David Baxter, having been born at Lethendy, near the beautiful Loch of Clunie, while his mother belonged to the good old town of Alyth. As far back as he can trace his paternal ancestry, they were all Stormont folk, his grandfather being William Baxter, of Marchall Lethendy, and his grandmother, Helen Johnston, of Essendy.

Mr. Baxter spent his youth and received his education in Perth, with the exception of two years, when he resided in Blairgowrie. From his earliest schooldays he was a reader, taking kindly to whatever literature came in his way, but his favourite study was history. If we may so express it, it was a happy accident which led him to be apprenticed in 1872 as a compositor in the office of the *Perthshire Constitutional*. This newspaper was then owned and edited by J. Watson Lyall, who was afterwards to make a name for himself in London as Editor of the *Sportsman's and Tourist's Guide*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The *Guide* was a conception of Mr. Watson Lyall's; it was carefully thought out, and the type set in Perth before he removed to London. Most

The young apprentice looked with admiration at the energy displayed by the editor, who was a man of great force of character, and who soon gathered around him the best local writers of the day, amongst whom may be mentioned—Dr. Hugh Barclay, the respected Sheriff-Substitute of the county for more than half a century, one of the best of the citizens of Perth, foremost in every good work, a humorous lecturer, a learned judge, and the wit of many a dinner table; Charles Wordsworth, the cultured Bishop of St. Andrews; the Rev. Dr. Robert Milne, the kindly, grave historian and minister of the West Parish Church; the Rev. Dr. John Anderson, the able minister of the Parish of Kinnoull, a naturalist and a genial disciple of the gentle Isaac Walton; P. R. Drummond, the bookseller, a man of many parts, his mind replete with a knowledge of the contents of his own books, and stored with stories of Perthshire men of the last century; R. S. Fittis, whose books were his friends; T. H. Marshall, humorist and historian; Dr. Lauder Lindsay, of Murray's Royal Asylum, scientist; Tom Morris, of Edinburgh, writer on antiquarian subjects; the Rev. Thomas Hardy, of Fowlis Wester, the genial writer of short Scottish stories; James Bruce (of Condie & Co.), the literary critic, and many others.

Mr. Baxter looked also to the hand of his foreman, Mr.

of the work of the *Guide* was done under the superintendence of Mr. John Robertson, then foreman in the *Constitutional Office*, afterwards joint proprietor, but now retired to the quiet of Wester Tarsappie, in view of the beautiful valley of the Tay, where he enjoys a leisured rest worthily earned.

John Robertson, little thinking that in after years he should occupy the same responsible position. Here, to a thoughtful lad such as the subject of our sketch, a new life appeared, as he saw newspapers from all parts of the world, the very names of which he had never before heard of; while the antiquarian and biographical articles appearing in the columns of the *Constitutional* were a revelation and a delight to him. He was often sent out to local contributors with the proofs of their articles, and the receiving of verbal instructions regarding corrections and other matters tended to foster his rapidly developing taste towards antiquarian literature. Thirty years ago the late R. S. Fittis did not have such a large library as that which now forms the Fittis collection in the Sandeman Public Library, but young Baxter was amazed to see the number of books which Fittis had even then amassed around him in his study in Canal Street, where he then resided. Thus was commenced an acquaintance with Fittis which ended only at the grave of the old man of letters.

Although Mr. Baxter has been all his life a lover of books he has never fallen into the extreme of being a book-worm. He has taken an active part and interest in all outdoor sports and pastimes, and this early love has led him to become the historian of local sport. Although actively engaged in the regular work of producing a newspaper, and in general printing work, he has found time to study for and write several small but comprehensive books dealing with sport in Perthshire. This branch of local history he has made peculiarly his own.

In 1898 appeared *Football in Perthshire* (Perth : Thomas Hunter). This work was followed in the subsequent year by *Golf in Perth and Perthshire* (Perth : Thomas Hunter); and in 1901, the last of this trio was published, *The Turf of Perth* (Perth : Thomas Hunter). The contents of these three books first appeared in the columns of the *Perthshire Constitutional* as special articles, and were afterwards published in book form. Mr. Baxter is a frequent contributor to the columns of the *Constitutional*, but he has not thought it worth while to collect or publish in book form any portion of the miscellaneous articles from his pen which have appeared in that well-known newspaper. In his two later books Mr. Baxter has adopted a most original form of page,—the text being small type, and the marginal titles produced in a medium-sized Venetian. Possibly to no one but a practical printer would the thought of such a unique arrangement have occurred, and many of the press notices commend this idea. The compositor-author not only wrote the works, but did everything necessary for their production until ready for the press, and in this he had an advantage over other writers.

Mr. Baxter has the method of a good historian : before beginning to write he gets up his subject, and this to one who loves it, is not only a real pleasure but an education. The number of works he has consulted would surprise any one but a painstaking author. His style is clear and forcible ; his matter is comprehensive, but never verbose ; while his facts may always be relied on. He is still a young man, and

we confidently look for more from his pen. What he has already given us has been well received in the sporting world, and by local and general readers. In order to show something of the romance with which he has invested his subject, we will conclude this article with some selections which speak for themselves.

The following short extract from *Golf in Perth and Perthshire*, will, we think, be interesting as well as a good example of our author's careful method. Writing on the subject of

### *The Moncrieffe Island Course*

he says : "Mr. P. W. Campbell was captain in 1897-1898 [of King James vi. Golf Club], and to him is due the honour of conceiving a golfing course on Moncrieffe Island. Buttonholing several of the more prominent members of the club, he induced them to visit the large tract of sandy ground which the river itself had formed into its present shape at a time anterior to history. The ground had been recently acquired by the Perth Town Council. Thanks to Mr. Hugh Campbell, Lord Provost Dewar, Bailie Halley, and Mr. R. Hay Robertson, terms were soon arranged, and the club took over the ground from the grazing tenant at a rent of £230, payable to the town, with a lease of thirty years. The building of a club-house and the laying out of the ground was a heavy item. Mr. P. W. Campbell again came to the front by raising £2000 in three days by means of debenture bonds. The success of the scheme was assured. Tom Morris was requisitioned from St. Andrews to lay the course, and at the opening ceremony the untiring exertions of Mr. Alex. Jamieson, one of the most enthusiastic as well as one of

the oldest members of the club, gave the new green a push off well in keeping with the earlier proceedings. The membership of the club since the opening of the course has gone up by leaps and bounds, the present figure being slightly over four hundred. Ladies are eligible for membership, and play over the full course. The surroundings are of the most delightful description, with Perth to the west and Kinnoull Hill a nice protection from east winds. At the southern extremity of the course the fresh breezes from the Firth of Tay are wafted across the ground, giving an invigorating influence to the participation of the game. As was remarked by *Golf* when the course was opened, 'Perth is widely known for the beauty of its surrounding scenery, and a visitor to the island will be charmed with its magnificence.' Bunkers, turf-dykes, mounds, trees, the river on both sides, and rough ground have all been laid under contribution to form interesting and difficult hazards.'





EX-BAILIE BRIDGES.

## JAMES BRIDGES LOCAL WRITER

A THERE is no citizen of Perth better known than ex-Bailie James Bridges, who, as Registrar of Births, Marriages, and Deaths, makes the acquaintance of the denizens at different important periods in their lives. Mr. Bridges is a native of Perth, as were his ancestors for many generations. He was born on the 3rd of November 1840. He received his education at the Free West Church School ; his teachers being George Adam, who subsequently went to Edinburgh, and the late James Moir, who during his long schoolastic career shaped the ideas of many young Perthites who have since made their mark in the world. From his thirteenth to his eighteenth year Mr. Bridges was a pupil teacher under Mr. Moir. Then he left his first love and joined the railway service, and for six years he worked as a clerk at Sighthill Station. He then returned to Perth, when he was employed for some time by Messrs. G. R. Douglas & Son, the well-known house painters and decorators, as their bookkeeper and measurer. Mr. Bridges is, however, a man of far too great originality of mind to have continued long at any mere routine work. He has all his life been an omnivorous reader, and his private library numbers many thousands of volumes.

In 1876 he joined the staff of the *Perthshire Advertiser* as descriptive writer and reporter, but long before this time he had been contributing to the press. The following year he was chosen to fill the editorial chair of the old Radical Perthshire newspaper in succession to Mr. Alfred Kinnear, who had removed to London.

In 1879 he entered the Town Council of Perth, where he remained for fourteen years. During part of this time he filled the office of Town's Treasurer, and afterwards he sat as a Magistrate. In 1892 he was appointed Registrar of Births, Marriages, and Deaths for the City of Perth, in succession to the late James Dewar, a gentleman of the old school, who at the time of his death was proprietor of the *Perthshire Courier*. On being appointed Registrar he resigned his position as Editor.

Besides attending to his official duties Mr. Bridges is a very busy public man. He was a member of the Perth School Board, and for nine years he was Convener of the Finance Committee; he is a Director of Sharp's Educational Institution; Member of the District Committee of the Perth County Council; Convener of the Law and Finance Committee of the Perth Parish Council; a Manager of the County and City of Perth Savings Bank; and a Director of the Perth Model Lodging House.

As a Lecturer he is much in request, and is ever ready to place his time and talents at the disposal of his fellow-citizens. Much of his writing has been contributed anonymously to the pages of the local newspapers. He is a versatile and well-

informed writer on subjects of local history. He has collected material for a history of his native city, and he has for some time been occupied with a work of great importance, namely, "Ecclesiastical Scotland from the Revolution to the Present Time," dealing with the Church life of all sects and denominations, which it is to be hoped may soon see the light.

In 1903 he wrote the local guide for the Photographic Convention of the United Kingdom when the Annual Meetings were held at Perth, under the Presidency of Sir Robert Pullar. This guide is short, but comprehensive—a veritable *multum in parvo*. Being got up in great haste there are several printer's errors, one of which was the joke of the convention. Having occasion to mention William the Lion, the printer has given us William the Lear, which the members of the convention would have to be William the *Liar*.

Another small work of Bailie Bridges' was printed in 1903 for private circulation, entitled *Huntingtower, an Historical Sketch*. This little work, which is well printed by Thomas Hunter, Perth, is a gem, and in it we see our local historian at his best.

Mr. Bridges was intimate with the late Bishop Wordsworth of the Episcopal Church, and he possesses many historic and valuable letters received from him. He also wrote the *History of Glenalmond College*, which was printed for private circulation.

Considering the numerous interests which take up the attention of Mr. Bridges, it seems surprising how he can find time to attend to them all; but his secret is industry and method. In his younger days he was a keen Radical, but he

is now under the impression that he has found political salvation in the fold of the Liberal Unionists. He is of medium height, and proportionally stout; his hair and beard, once black, is now turning grey. In movement he is inclined to be slow, but mentally he is ever active. He is a fluent, easy speaker; homely, yet forcible in manner and language. In writing he is more polished, but equally clear and vigorous. In private life he is a most agreeable companion, free from fuss, and brimming over with funny stories.

Selection from *Huntingtower*:

"The river Almond is not one of the large rivers of Scotland, but it is one of the most romantic in its scenery that any lover of nature could wish to explore. From its source, not far from Killin, till it mingles its waters with the lordly Tay above the Woody Island, it traverses a district not only rich in beauty, but associated with some of the most stirring events in Scottish history. There are not many who have traversed its banks above Newton Bridge—the point where it crosses the road as the holiday-maker goes to Amulree, and flows down that romantic strath or gorge which we call the Sma' Glen—but even on that stretch one can spend a summer day in a solitude that may be felt, and hold communion with the hills and his own spirit, that will send him back to the world refreshed and strengthened as only nature can do. Have we ever thought how beautiful this world is—what a gracious provision has been made for our solace here? In the middle of his poem, 'The Golden Legend,' Longfellow makes his hero exclaim, 'Italy, Italy land of the Madonna.' How beautiful it is.

“ But we do not require to go outside Auld Scotland to be compelled to make an exclamation of beauty. Where there is the seeing eye, and the soul in unison with nature, we have a pleasure that words cannot express. And yet much of the pleasure depends on associations and knowledge. These are the two things that make nature alive and beautiful. As regards knowledge, what a source of pleasure has the geologist, the botanist, and the naturalist over him who knows nothing of these things, in walking through a district. Every stone—even the stones that form a dry-stone dyke; every flower, the very sparrows feeding and quarrelling over a find in the shape of a seed on the roadside, give the wayfarer thoughts that, as Wordsworth says, are too deep for tears. It is not open to all to have this enjoyment, because their education on these matters has been neglected; but it is open to all, by reading and study, to partake of the pleasures of association. The stretch of road between the town of Ayr and the monument to Burns at Bridge of Doon is neither better nor worse, as regards scenery, than any country road, and yet, year after year, thousands of pilgrims journey over it, look into the cottage on the roadside, enter Alloway Kirkyard, read the monumental stone to Burn’s father, walk round the roofless church, because all is hallowed by the national bard. It is these associations that give the district its glamour and attraction; and when one goes down to the Doon, below the monument, beautiful as the banks and scenery are, yet it is the man Burns who sheds the halo that gives the perennial interest. Oh, that men would make themselves acquainted with the great ones who have trod this beautiful world; and, beautiful as it is, it would be more beautiful still.”

FRANCIS BUCHANAN W. WHITE,  
M.D., F.L.S., F.E.S.

THIS writer was more of a scientist than a man of letters ; he has, however, in his all too brief day, wielded a facile pen. *The Flora of Perthshire*, published after his death, and edited by Dr. James W. H. Trail, is a fit memorial of the life and work of this eminent son of Perth.

The father of our author was an able and respected physician, who practised his profession in Perth for about half a century, residing in the same house, No. 2 Atholl Place, for almost if not the whole period. The name of Dr. Francis J. White will long be remembered in Perth ; he was a citizen of the best sort, doing his duty without fuss. Any day he might have been seen on the streets, or taking his constitutional walk on the North Inch by the side of the river Tay. The fashion of his dress little changed ; he wore at all times a long-skirted frock-coat buttoned up to the neck, and a silk hat of a make peculiar to himself.

The son of this gentle physician, Francis Buchanan White White, was born at Perth on the 20th of March 1842, where he received his early education. His studies were further prosecuted at Edinburgh, of which University he was a



*From Photo by]*

DR. BUCHANAN WHITE,

1842-1894.

*[Jackson, Perth,*



distinguished student and Doctor of Medicine. In 1866 he married, and after travelling for a year on the Continent of Europe he returned to Perth, where he settled. His residence was a fine house standing in its own grounds on the lower slopes of Kinnoull Hill and overlooking the city. He never practised the Profession of Medicine, but gave up his life to the study of natural science, to which he had been devoted from his earliest years. Of Dr. Buchanan White it may well be said that he was the founder of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science, and he was naturally chosen as its first President in 1867. He modestly ascribed the credit for the success of the society to others, but we are free to say that without such a man as he, so well equipped and so devoted to the cause, the society never could have become the educative and powerful organisation it now is. He gave force and impetus to the study of natural science, and drew around him a band of like-minded students. Early in its history the society established a museum, and in the classification of the exhibits Dr. Buchanan White signalised himself, devoting much skill and care to the work.

Mr. Henry Coates (his successor in the president's chair), on whom the mantle of Dr. White has worthily fallen, in speaking of him, has said that "the museum is a monument which will tell to future generations the story of years of anxious thought, of patient labour, and of loving care for all the things by which God has made this world beautiful. . . . Dr. Buchanan White was an unobtrusive but devout believer in Him who is the author of nature. While he was a

thoroughgoing evolutionist, he yet knew that, after all, evolution is but creation under a new name."

Dr. Buchanan White died on the 3rd of December 1894.

We have referred to the appearance of the father, but that of the son was even more striking, for amongst a population of trouser-wearing men he constantly wore a kilt and jacket of drab tweed, and in keeping with this costume a blue highland bonnet. Possibly he found this dress the most suitable for his long walks, climbings, and journeyings throughout all parts of Perthshire.

He was a handsome specimen of a man, dignified yet perfectly unassuming in his manner. We daresay it never occurred to himself, and certainly it never occurred to those with whom he came in contact, that he was differently dressed from the ordinary mortal. Although a native of a lowland town, the doctor became his dress like a son of the hills. He has left us a noble example of energy and zeal, and his writings and researches will always be best appreciated by those who, by similar studies and pursuits, are most able to estimate their uncommon merit.

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